PROCEEDINGS - 05/15/2017

	TROCHEDINOD 03/13/2017			
1	Volume III			
2	Pages 1-147			
3				
4	Brookline Zoning Board of Appeals Hearing			
5	455 Harvard Street			
6	Comprehensive Permit Application			
7	Harvard Danesh 455, LLC			
8	May 15, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.			
9	Brookline Town Hall			
10	333 Washington Street, 6th Floor			
11	Brookline, Massachusetts 02445			
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16	Reporter: Kristen C. Krakofsky			
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1	Page 2 APPEARANCES	1	Page 4
2	Board Members:	1	PROCEEDINGS:
3	Kate Poverman, Chair	2	7:04 p.m.
4	Lark Palermo	3	MS. POVERMAN: We're going to begin and
5	Christopher Hussey	4	reconvene the 40B hearing on the comprehensive
6	christopher nussey	5	permit application for 455 Harvard Street.
7	Town Staff:	6	If people could not talk while I'm talking,
		7	that would be fabulous.
8	Alison Steinfeld, Planning Director	8	As you may recall, this is an application
9	Karen Martin, Planner	9	to construct 17 residential units, including four
10	Polly Selkoe, Assistant Director for Regional	10	affordable units and about 17,000 square feet of
11	Planning	11	retail space.
12		12	MR. DAVID DANESH: 1,700.
13	Environmental Peer Reviewer:	13	MS. POVERMAN: Okay. 1,700 square feet of
14	John Chambers, PG, LSP, Senior Vice President,		retail space.
15	Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.	15	There was an initial presentation by the
16		16	developer at the first hearing, and at the second
17	Urban Design Peer Reviewer:	17	one, we heard some comments by the planning board
18	Clifford J. Boehmer, AIA, President & Principal,	18	and the preservation commission and took some public
19	Davis Square Architects	19	testimony. There was also a site visit made on
20		20	April 19th. The applicant was asked to provide
21	Applicant:	21	additional materials, and tonight the developer's
22	David Danesh, Harvard Danesh 455, LLC	22	team will present those.
23	Danny Danesh Harvard Danesh 455, LLC	23	After that, we're going to get a report by
24	Geoff Engler, Vice President, SEB, LLC	24	Cliff Boehmer, who is the design peer reviewer for
	Page 3		Page 5
1	Nick Griffin, CUBE 3 Studio, LLC	1	the town. We are also going to get a report from
2	Fred Lebow, FSL Associates	2	John Chambers, the environmental peer reviewer, and
3		3	Polly Selkoe, who is the assistant director for
4	Members of the Public:	4	regional planning. She is sitting to my left, and I
5	Dan Hill, Esquire	I -	
	ban niii, Esquiic	5	will introduce the rest of us in just one minute.
6	Janet Echelman, 64 Coolidge Street	6	will introduce the rest of us in just one minute. Who else are we going to hear?
6 7			-
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Page 6 1 additional information from the developer, that 2 would be fantastic.

MR. ENGLER: For the record, my name is

4 Geoff Engler from SEB, affordable housing

5 consultant for the applicant. Thank you to the

6 board.

I'll be brief. Since the last meeting,

8 we've had a neighborhood meeting. I think it was

9 May 3rd -- May 3rd or 4th, about two weeks ago on

10 the first floor of this building.

Tonight we're going to be presenting an 12 updated presentation of the architectural based on,

13 largely, the April 7th memo we received from the

14 planning department that asked to see additional

15 information. We're also going to have -- and Nick

16 Griffin from CUBE 3 will be presenting that this

17 evening. Peter Bartash, who you are customarily

18 used to seeing could not be with us tonight, but

19 Nick knows this design equally well.

20 And then we're going to hear from Fred

21 Lebow as well from FSL Associates. He's going to

22 comment on the environmental memo that was issued

23 last week relative to the peer review findings on

24 the environmental situation on the site.

Page 7

And then I think you indicated that we've

2 heard public testimony on this application, but I

3 don't believe we have.

MS. POVERMAN: I think we heard some, but

5 we'll hear some more tonight.

MR. ENGLER: Right. So we look forward to

7 that, although this board should note that we heard

8 loud and clear some of the concerns a couple weeks

9 ago, and we're working and looking at some of those

10 very intimately, some of the very specific technical

11 questions. Admittedly, there were more general

12 questions as well or comments. So we look forward

13 to presenting and hearing your comments. Thank you.

14 MR. GRIFFIN: For the record, my name is

15 Nick Griffin with CUBE 3 Studio. I apologize Peter

16 can't be here.

17 So I'm going to bring up the presentation

18 and go through the new information that we've

19 provided since the last one.

20 So I'm going to quickly walk through the

21 information that you guys have seen on this date.

22 None of this information has changed.

So the first new slide here we have, we

24 were asked to clarify some of the setbacks at the

Page 8 1 street and the adjacent buildings. So you'll see

2 here we have our proposed building surrounded by the

3 property line dashed in blue. If we start at the

4 street along Harvard Street there's a zero lot line,

5 so it is up against the property line along Harvard

6 Street.

As you turn the corner to Thorndike, we

8 start in the corner, again, right up against the

9 property line. The property line curves as it goes

10 back towards Thorndike. The building is straight.

It doesn't follow the curve exactly, so you get to

about 1 foot 6 when you get towards the back. That

gives you about 7 foot 8 to Thorndike Street from

our building.

15 Adjacent back to 78 Thorndike, the building

16 is about 11 foot 9 feet (sic) from our proposed

17 building with the property line falling in between

about 5 foot 1 off of our project and 6 foot 8 off

the main proportion of 78 Thorndike. 19

20 There's a bay window and a staircase at the

21 bottom floor that sticks out about 3 feet from that

22 building, which leaves about 3 foot 7 to the

23 property line.

24 So that's, again, the setbacks along the

Page 9

1 street and the adjacent building.

This is all the same.

We were also asked to revise street

4 elevations. So this top one is along Harvard Street

5 looking north. You'll see our proposed building in

6 the center. To the left is the parking and the

7 retail building along Harvard Street. To the right

8 you have Thorndike Street cutting through this

section and the gas station and retail in the

10 foreground with the first building on Thorndike

11 Street and Coolidge in the back.

The next section below is the opposite side

13 of Thorndike -- or, sorry, opposite side of Harvard

Street looking south. This is a larger scale. It

goes from Babcock all the way to Commonwealth. In

the center you'll see a blue square that represents

our proposed building. That would be behind you in

this section, but we wanted to add it in to show how

it fits into the surrounding scale and context.

20 If we go 90 degrees, this is a section

21 through Thorndike to show the elevation along that

22 looking west and our proposed building here to the

23 right of the center or cut through Harvard Street,

24 the neighbors on Thorndike Street on the right, and

12

across Harvard Street to the left.
 We were also asked to provide a site
 section, so this is running parallel to Harvard

4 Street just to the north. So our proposed building

5 is in the center. To the left, again, is the

6 parking, the retail. Thorndike cuts through the

7 center to the right, the gas station to the right,

8 cut through with the elevation of 77 Thorndike and

9 Coolidge to the right.

We were also asked to provide a lighting plan, so this was generated to show the proposed lighting on the site. So the shapes are the cast

13 direct light from each fixture. The numbers that

14 surround, which are hard to read, but show the foot

15 candles that are ambient light from these lights.

16 So we've marked out the max direct light along

17 Harvard Street with the max ambient light being

18 close to the corner, and we have our minimum direct

19 light in the back along 78 Thorndike with the

20 minimum ambient light being off of that at point

21 from foot candles.

22 And lastly, we were asked to clarify our

23 parking, which is enclosed at the ground level. So

24 you see you enter off Thorndike Street, and then

Page 11

1 there's thirteen total spaces. Eleven of those are
2 made up in stackers, so the three to the right and

3 two to the left are stacking cars over each other,

4 which you get a total of eleven spaces. And then

5 there's a single standard space and a single

6 accessible space.

7 And that's it for the new information that 8 we provided. The rest of this presentation is,

9 again, exactly like it was previously.

10 MS. POVERMAN: Lark, do you have any

11 questions on the presentation at this time?

MS. PALERMO: No.

13 MS. POVERMAN: Chris?

MR. HUSSEY: So there's no changes made yet

15 relative to the -- you said you had a meeting with

16 the neighbors?

14

17 MR. ENGLER: Nick didn't attend that

18 meeting. Peter did. But I think I know where

19 you're going with this question.

20 But consistent with every 40B application

21 that's been before this board over the last two

22 years, we communicated to the planning department

23 that we would like the benefit of Mr. Boehmer's

24 formal peer review prior to making changes, because

Page 12 1 then we're just chasing things. So we'll obviously

2 have that tonight, both verbal testimony and in

3 writing, presumably. And then after that I think

4 it's more consistent with previous applications that

5 you'll start to see some changes in the actual

6 design.

MR. HUSSEY: Okay. That's what I

8 suspected, but I just wanted to clarify to make sure

9 that was the case. Thank you.

0 MS. POVERMAN: I don't have any questions

11 at this time either.

Then I think we will proceed at this time

13 to the peer review from Mr. Boehmer.

4 And I'm assuming, Cliff, that this takes

15 into account the new presentation as well as

16 comments on the old, since they're really --

17 MS. PALERMO: I think he references in his

18 report --

19 MS. POVERMAN: Oh, that's right. Yeah, I

20 do remember that.

21 MS. SELKOE: Mr. Boehmer is going to use

22 some of the slides from the development team to

23 illustrate what he's saying.

MS. POVERMAN: Great.

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MR. BOEHMER: I'm Cliff Boehmer. I'm the

2 peer reviewer for the zoning board of appeals.

I think tonight what I'd like to do -- the

4 zoning board has received my written comments. And

5 I think, because I've been the peer reviewer for a

6 number of other developments, particularly on

7 Harvard Street, what I'd like to do is take

8 selective comments, really kind of hone in right on

9 this site as opposed to looking all the way up and

10 down Harvard Street that I've done in previous

11 presentations.

12 Certainly, if anybody has any broader

13 questions about how this development -- or how $\ensuremath{\mathtt{I}}$

14 feel this development fits into a larger urban

15 context going the entire length of Harvard Street

16 all the way across Harvard Avenue, I'm happy to talk

17 about that. But I thought maybe for the sake of

18 expediency, I didn't need to necessarily drone all

.9 the way from one end to the other.

20 MS. POVERMAN: But it is contained in your

21 written report?

MR. BOEHMER: It's totally in the written

23 report for reference.

4 Similarly, I think because the slides -- I

1 did base my review on this current slide show. That 2 included those new exhibits. So I think what I'll 3 really try to do is focus in on some specific design

4 comments.

MS. SELKOE: Just for the sake of the 6 audience, Mr. Boehmer's report is on the town 7 website, put on today, and so you'll have a chance 8 to go over it yourself if you'd like.

MR. BOEHMER: And then I'm very happy to 10 answer any questions. But if I might cut to the 11 chase, if I could get detailed a little more quickly

12 than some of the other presentations I've made.

14 large number of materials. They're all on the

15 website. Everything I reviewed is on the website.

So I'll start by saying that I did review a

16 I'll make a few comments about most of them. I will

17 say one of the most important -- or certainly, as a

18 design professional, one of the most important

19 documents was the planning board comments, and many

20 of my comments really concur with the comments of

21 the planning board, and I'll get to the details of

22 that.

13

23 I will point out, though, for -- I'll take 24 selective parts. Again, this is a seven-page

Page 16

Page 17

1 is about a two-mile stretch, really nicely coherent

2 for many parts of the stretch along Harvard Avenue.

But focusing in on the area that we're

4 talking about, the area along Harvard that frames

5 the proposed development includes the gas station

6 immediately across Thorndike Street that is followed

7 by single-story commercial uses that are tight to

the sidewalk all the way up to Naples Road.

In the other direction, it's away from

Coolidge Corner, the subject site abuts a parking

11 lot for a small commercial development that includes

a Starbucks and several single-story commercial uses

up to the sidewalk, and there's a large parking area

open to the sidewalk that serves T.J. Maxx. So what

15 you see when you're moving generally in that

direction on Harvard Street is kind of a dissolution

of the coherence of the consistency of the

architecture. There are many broken spots or

missing teeth along Harvard Street. But compared to

other stretches of Harvard, as you're moving towards

Boston -- the Boston end of it, it falls apart a

22 little bit for a ways.

Directly across Harvard Street is another 24 gas station -- from the subject site -- is another

Page 15

1 report, and you can refer to the website or ask me 2 questions. I think there were 19 or 20 letters from

3 the community, and I'm sure the zoning board is

4 aware of that and has read them. I believe every

5 one of the letters was in opposition to the project.

6 And I did sort through all of those to see what the

7 architectural and urban design issues were as far as

8 their comments, and they were mainly related to

9 density issues on the site, parking, the height of

10 the building, and also, there was at least one

11 letter that was concerned about the demolition of 12 the existing gas station on the site. But as I

13 said, there were 19 or 20 letters.

14 And for anyone who hasn't walked around the

15 site recently, there are -- when I did my

16 walk-through on the 28th -- April 28th -- there are

17 some marks on the site that show you where the

18 corners of the building are. You kind of have to

19 look in there, look for orange paint. But they are

20 there for anyone who wants to get an up-close look

21 at where the location of the building is.

Focusing in on Harvard Street, Harvard

23 Avenue -- again, I won't walk through every block,

24 as I've done for this board a number of times. It

1 gas station followed by several blocks of

2 single-story commercial to the sidewalk on the way

3 towards Coolidge Corner. Again, this is a more

4 coherent direction of the architecture all the way

5 to the large temple structure that we know is

6 undergoing some renovation in a future 40B

7 development at the corner of Williams Street.

Going towards Boston on the other side of 9 Harvard, virtually all of the development is set far

back from the street punctuated with parking areas

11 until you're across from the T.J. Maxx and then some

residential apartment buildings start again.

So, you know, by today's urban planning

standards, when I talk about dissolution, it's really that the kind of more intense

pedestrian-friendly environment dissipates a bit as

17 you move towards Boston.

This site is -- a lot of the study -- or a

19 lot of the interest of this site, you know, from a

technical perspective is -- and an impact

perspective -- this is a place very close to a place

where there's a bend in the road where Harvard takes

23 a northerly -- more northwest direction. And that

24 is important for shadow impact in particular, but

13

14

1 that covers most of the site with the building

4 one-bedroom and two-bedroom units with 12 ones, 3

5 twos, and 1 three; 13 spaces, 11 of which are the

6 mechanized spaces within the building footprint;

8 space accessed at the corner of Thorndike and

7 about 17- -- I saw 1,735 square feet of commercial

9 Harvard Street. So the access is right over there.

And there's our mixed-use piece. The 1,735 square

2 footprint. Included in the program are 17

3 residential units. It's a preponderance of

Page 20

Page 21

1 also for a couple other reasons that are due to 2 solar exposure, unlike the stretch closer to -- as 3 you move closer to Coolidge Corner, it gets more 4 westerly as opposed to -- the road flattens out a 5 bit. But it is a significant thing. I think as far as where this site is, I 7 think the -- in the general sense, that the idea of 8 restoring another piece of Harvard Street or 9 bringing more commercial activity closer to the 10 street -- more activity closer to the street -- is a 11 good idea. I think it really is a beneficial impact 12 on the town. There are other issues we'll get to 13 about this particular expression. 14 I think the surprising thing about this

15 site -- because of where it is and because of that 17 the Allston end is that it's a very exposed site,

feet is in this area. At this end of the building is the residential entry to the building. The building height along Harvard Street is 13 approximately 47 feet. The grade isn't perfectly flat, but I think the maximum height from grade is 16 kind of diminution of density as you move closer to 47 feet. It occurs at this face of the building. It steps down to 35 feet near the abutting property. 18 which is really interesting. There's a gas station So you can just catch one little look, and we'll 19 towards Coolidge Corner, so there's an open view look at these other perspectives shortly. It steps 20 once you're at the Daily Catch -- you know, looking down to 35 feet as you get close to the abutting 21 at the view past the Daily Catch. It's very exposed property on Thorndike. 22 for a good distance up Thorndike. And obviously, The site plan indicates a proposed loading 23 it's very -- this view here is very exposed, 23 zone on Harvard Street in the area of where there is 24 virtually right across the street. 24 an existing curb cut. For all of you who probably Page 19 And then I think the most surprising thing 1 know this site, given its former use, there are 2 is the view that you get looking across the parking 2 extensive curb cuts going around the corner. There 3 lot from that commercial development towards the 4 Allston -- or maybe it's Brighton. It is Brighton 5 or Allston? It's Boston. MS. POVERMAN: Allston/Brighton. MR. BOEHMER: It is Allston. Okay. 7 residential use. So, actually, that will come up several 9 times, probably, repetitiously in my report, but it

10 turns out that that's a very important view of the 11 building. 12 One of the areas that I am charged with 13 looking at is the orientation of the buildings in 14 relation to each other and to the streets, parking 15 areas, open space. And maybe for the benefit of 16 some of the people who weren't here, I should go --17 I thought maybe there would be a more detailed 18 description, but you passed over your previous 19 description, so I'll quickly go through the 20 fundamentals of the project. MS. POVERMAN: Sure. I think that would be 22 helpful. That's fine. MR. BOEHMER: So the proposal is a

24 building -- a new four-story, mixed-used building

3 is a proposal in the plans for a loading zone. I'm 4 not the right reviewer to comment on that, but 5 that's roughly where it is to provide access for 6 deliveries for the commercial space and for the The open space in this -- we saw this in the plan slides. The open space on the site is 10 limited to 5-foot setbacks to the Thorndike Street 11 neighbor and the commercial parking area on Harvard 12 Street. The setback is adequate for a concrete sidewalk and a potential narrow planting strip. The 14 property line along Thorndike Street, so this line, 15 follows a gentle curve. You saw that in the plan. 16 That does result in a narrowing of the sidewalk planting strip as one approaches Harvard Street, so it gets a little broader. The building stays in a straight line, but the road kind of bows out away 20 from the building. The building, as proposed, has limited interior amenities. It pretty much has an entry 23 lobby, a mail area, and some bicycle storage, so 24 pretty basic amenities. It is only a 17-apartment

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Page 22 1 building. That's not kind of surprising for this 2 scale, but that's what is proposed.

Due to the orientation of the building and 4 the fact that it's a corner site open on three sides

5 including the parking lot to the northwest, three

6 elevations will have very good access to sunlight

7 virtually year-round. I saw a quick run-through of

8 the shadow studies. I can talk about that more.

9 The project architecture is probably better suited

10 for that.

The north-facing elevation facing the 12 Thorndike Street neighbor will receive limited 13 morning light during the summer months. That's 14 because the building is cranked around. So in the 15 morning, actually, sunlight will hit the elevation

16 of this building on the Thorndike Street side.

17 There are shadow studies included in the 18 application materials and, not unexpectedly, have

19 indicated that most of the impact will be on Harvard

20 Street in the parking area to the north in the

21 morning and on the Thorndike neighbor and Thorndike

22 Street during the afternoon hours. Shadows are

23 minimized in the summer and are maximum in the

24 winter.

While cutting back on building massing near 2 the neighbor -- and we can talk in more detail about 3 that. While cutting back on building massing near 4 the neighbor is effective in increasing the sky 5 view -- so when you talk about the sunlight, it's 6 important to distinguish, you know, just bright

7 light that you get from the sky versus direct

8 sunlight. They both are worthy of discussion. But

9 in this particular building, cutting back the

10 building massing would be effective at increasing

11 the sky views. But in spite of that fact, there

12 will unquestionably be a significant change to the

13 southern exposure for the neighbor -- for this one

14 neighbor in particular on Thorndike Street, given

15 the small scale of the existing building and large

16 setback of the existing building.

17 But moving on, I'll get on to the building

18 design.

19 Are there any questions so far about urban

20 context?

MS. POVERMAN: I think, in general, what 22 we're going to do is allow the board to have the

23 prerogative of asking questions now. But everybody

24 in the audience will have plenty of time to ask

1 questions if their questions aren't answered in the

2 course of the presentation. So just hold on to your

3 questions. You'll have a chance.

MR. BOEHMER: All right. And I'll keep 5 moving.

6 MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.

MR. BOEHMER: Most of the buildings similar

8 to other proposed -- or recently proposed mixed-use

structures on Harvard Street employ a traditional

tripartite vertical proportioning system of base,

11 body, and cap that you can read pretty clearly here:

base, body, cap.

13

Page 23

1

The renderings indicate a strong masonry 14 first-floor language very similar in scale,

articulation, and materials palette to the existing

16 one-story commercial uses along Harvard Street.

17 The two-story body of the building is clad

18 in brick on three elevations that are prominently visible. And quickly look at those, that Thorndike 19

view towards Harvard, and that's the view coming

21 from Allston/Brighton. So you're looking at brick

22 in all of those elevations, masonry, unspecified

23 masonry material at that level, and a combination of

24 glass and cementitious siding up at that level.

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Page 24

The top floor is set back from the body 2 along Thorndike and Harvard Street. That's this

3 piece here, the top story. It's set back what

4 appears to be about a foot. I couldn't really tell,

5 but it appears to be about a foot. Along the

6 parking lot to the north, it isn't clear what the

setback may be. I just couldn't tell from the

8 drawings. That's what I'm talking about, right

along there.

10 The main body of the top floor is set back 11 between approximately 18 to 22 feet from the second

and third floors at the abutting property on

Thorndike. So when I said before that the building

steps back, the neighbor's home is right in there,

and that's a step down. At this end of the

building, it's approximately 35 feet tall. And

17 that's -- I already told you the top floor material.

18 So the only abutting structure is the

19 neighboring home on Thorndike Street. It's 2.5

stories with its first floor about 3 feet off grade,

21 a very dormered hip roof that appears to contain

22 potentially habitable third-floor space. I don't

23 know if that's occupied.

There are two bays on the first floor of

1 the structure that face the subject property and are 2 quite close to the property line. As we learned

3 tonight, it's 3 1/2 feet; is that right?

MR. GRIFFIN: Yeah.

MR. BOEHMER: Okay. The Thorndike Street 6 elevation contained in the May 15th presentation 7 materials indicate that the ridge height of the home 8 is approximately equal to the height of the flat 9 roof of the proposed new structure, and we saw that

10 in that street elevation. And this is possible,

11 particularly given that it is a very steep, tall,

12 hip roof on that neighbor's building, and Thorndike

13 Street does slope upwards as you go away from

14 Harvard Street, whereas, obviously, the flat roof

15 stays flat.

16 Generally, as depicted in the project 17 renderings, the Harvard Street elevation is the most 18 successful material selection, and its deployment is 19 appropriate. For example, using brick, both for its 20 permanence and to follow the curved corner -- brick 21 is a very good material for going around corners --22 the use of awnings to enhance the pedestrian 23 experience, contrasting window patterns at the attic 24 level -- that helps with breaking down the reading

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1 you can't really tell what's going on, whether the 2 brick is supposed to carry around or whether the

3 bays are supposed to win and create interest in the

4 building. So strictly a tectonic comment. As was noted in the letter from the 6 planning board, consideration should be given to

7 relocating the fourth-floor cornice to the top of the third floor, most likely retaining a smaller

scale cornice at the top of the building. And what

the planning board said, and I agreed with them, is

that if your goal is to intensify the reading of a

three-story building as opposed to a four-story

building and perhaps even relate more to the scale

as you move up Thorndike Street, the largest roof

statement or cornice should happen at this level,

16 not at that level. So a small comment, but it could make a very big difference in the perception of the

height of the building. Obviously it doesn't change

the height of the building. 19

Increasing the setback along Harvard Street 21 could increase the usefulness of the sidewalk space.

For example, creating enough space for outdoor

dining. It would also address planning board

concerns regarding the sight line down Harvard

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1 of the height as opposed to just carrying the same 2 pattern all the way up.

But I do have recommendations for 4 additional study. If you can bear with me, I'm 5 going to go through them now and maybe do a very 6 quick repeat at the end to help refocus.

So where the building rounds the corner, 8 the dimension of the masonry bands between the 9 floors is greatly diminished. So as you notice 10 here, there's a very large band of what we call 11 punched openings. Masonry band diminishes 12 significantly at the corner.

13 My comment is that it seems that the corner 14 should either be recessed for its full height with 15 greater differentiation of materials and 16 articulation, or the masonry band should continue 17 around the corner at the same dimension as the 18 abutting elevations to ensure a sense of solidity.

And the main point I'm making is that it's 20 kind of neither here nor there in this corner. And 21 some of the comments later get into a lack of 22 articulation in the building. And the corner is,

23 you know, traditionally a good place to create 24 articulation and interest, and at the moment it's -- 1 Street.

Remember, from the planning board, they 3 didn't actually mention setting it back further for

4 the use of potentially populating the sidewalk,

which I think is a -- could be a very good thing to

6 look at, and I know Brookline does have some

7 standards about sidewalk dining dimensions. But it

8 also -- because Thorndike doesn't hit Harvard at a

90-degree angle, it's a little tricky looking around

the corner towards the Boston side, so pulling the

11 building back -- again, this is not my expertise,

but it certainly is just logical that the building

pulled back further would only enable you to see

further down Harvard Street and negotiate the street

15 more safely.

16 So I'm going to move on to the other 17 elevations. Two other elevations of the building are very visible when approaching on Harvard Street from either direction. Perhaps the most prominent elevation is seen when approaching the site from Boston, which, frankly, was a little surprising to me. This elevation requires the most additional study, in this reviewer's opinion, as it contains a

24 variety of elements that currently are what I call

24

13

Page 30 1 disassociated, creating a lack of coherent 2 elevation. Included in the visible elements are 3 service entries, the end of the heavy commercial 4 band, a truncated top floor, an exterior balcony, 5 rooftop mechanical equipment, and a large, flat 6 masonry face that actually has limitations by 7 building code of how -- the amount of openings that you can have. So, in short, it's a tough problem. MS. POVERMAN: I'm sorry to jump in. 9 10 I understand limitations when facing 11 another building, but why are there limitations for 13 MR. BOEHMER: It's the distance to the 14 property line. 15 MR. HUSSEY: The assumption is there's 16 going to be another building there some day. 17 MS. POVERMAN: Okay, thanks. 18 MR. BOEHMER: It's not -- anyway, it's 19 there as an issue. Or it's a constraint and a 20 challenge from an architectural perspective.

But my main point was that this is a really

22 visible elevation and really important to make this

23 make you very happy to be entering Brookline. The

24 town line is just a little ways behind us here. Page 31 So what I meant is there's this element 2 here that wraps around. And I will repeat that I 3 think this -- the base -- especially when you've 4 looked at the detailing of the commercial buildings 5 further up, it works really well, actually. We need 6 more detail on what the materials are that we don't 7 know, but, as I said, there's a balcony up here, 8 service doors along at this level, the truncated top 9 floor. It's just a lot of pieces to pull together. 10 So that, to me, is why that is the one that has a 11 lot of issues that need to be dealt with. I outline a small point. It's also 12 13 possible that as the design develops, that there may 14 be a number of penetrations in this facade that are 15 necessitated by mechanical equipment. I'm not clear 16 on what all the mechanical equipment may be, but 17 these are all the things that need to be worked into 18 the design. While it isn't possible to know the future

19 While it isn't possible to know the future 20 of the parking area along this elevation, for now, 21 this will be the first major structure encountered 22 in Brookline when entering the town from Harvard 23 Avenue, which makes it critical to resolve this 24 perspective of the proposed project.

Page 32 Note that relative to this elevation, the 2 planning board has recommended a deeper setback to 3 allow for a vegetative buffer to screen the view, 4 which as an architect, my first instinct isn't to 5 hide the building. It's to make the building 6 better -- to look better. So I think the idea of 7 having some space to screen could be worked into the study of this elevation. Given the intense western exposure, perhaps sun shading could be considered too, because this facade will get an awful lot of afternoon light. Moving around to another -- when approaching from Coolidge Corner, because of the open-to-corner gas station next to the Daily Catch, most of the Thorndike Street elevation is visible. And I think this perspective -- I might be wrong, but I think this perspective may be somewhat wrong. I tried to get this view and couldn't get it. It kind of compresses that space where the gas station is, so I think you actually see more of this 21 building -- of your building from there. But, anyway, some considerations for this elevation I think are important.

Page 33 1 proportions are suitable, the elevation lacks 2 articulation and it's very stark, particularly when

I think while the window sizes and

4 neighbors on Thorndike. More movement, increased 5 top-floor setback, brick detailing, etc., could 6 greatly improve this elevation. The plainness of

3 contrasted with the smaller-scale residential

7 the elevation is exacerbated by the minimal setback 8 on Thorndike that precludes any softening with

9 landscape materials. The sidewalk is very cramped.10 And, in fact, the planning board has also

11 recommended increasing the setbacks to align with 12 the average setback of the home on Thorndike.

I'm personally not convinced, for this use and this site, that it needs to be set back as far as the neighboring buildings, but I think looking at more setback is important.

Use of bays above the ground level may be a way to enhance the pedestrian experience and not lose as much square footage upstairs, so there could be some ground gained by recessing the bottom floor. It's not clear in the materials if a garage door is proposed to block pedestrian views into the parking garage as well as noise that may be generated from the automated parking system. That was something

21

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1 that came up in some of the letters, was concern
2 about noise. I don't know that system well enough,
3 and we do have a peer reviewer who's reviewing that,

4 I think.

Also on that elevation, it's not clear what function or what the aesthetics -- the developed aesthetics of the metal mesh infill panels are, and I can show you those. They're better just to see them on the drawings.

10 So here we are on Thorndike Street.

11 There's the parking area where I'm asking whether

12 there's a garage door, and these are metal mesh

13 infill panels. They're interesting because I don't

14 believe that this is going to be an open-air parking

15 garage. But from what I can tell from the drawings,

16 I think it's going to be conditioned space, which

17 means that you don't really need to ventilate.

18 Also, if it were open, I think having an answer

19 about the noise issue would be particularly

20 important if that is an open mesh. So basically,

21 there just isn't enough materials for me to make

22 much of a --

23 MR. HUSSEY: Mr. Boehmer, if those metal 24 mesh panels were eliminated, then you'd have to have 1 talking about, I think.

2 So the elevation that's mostly screened 3 from the public view -- it's the only one that's

4 really screened from public view -- faces the

5 neighboring structure on Thorndike Street. We're

6 looking at it here. The intent of the proposed

7 massing is to drop the scale of the building down to

8 three stories for most of the footprint where it's

9 closest to the neighbors. So in this area here and

10 here, it's dropped down to 35 feet and set back.

11 We're looking at -- I forget how many feet.

12 Something like 18 feet further back. Something like

13 that. And then after that it increases to the full

14 four-story height as you get closer to Harvard

15 Street.

16 While the strategy makes sense as far as 17 making the transition from the commercial zone to 18 the existing residential zone -- which the existing

19 commercial zone actually does allow for 40-foot tall

20 buildings in the base zoning -- this reviewer

21 believes that several improvements could be made to

22 this elevation, starting with the recommendation

23 that the planning board made, which is increasing

24 the setback at the ground level, which will increase

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1 mechanical ventilation from the garage, wouldn't
2 you?
3 MR. BOEHMER: That's right. That's exactly

4 right. And the point I was making is from my

5 review -- and I'm not the architect, so I didn't do

6 the arithmetic. But my quick review, it doesn't 7 look like there's enough available open space to

8 create a naturally ventilated parking garage.

9 MS. POVERMAN: Mr. Griffin, do you know

10 what the ventilation is for the parking aspect of 11 the building?

12 MR. DA

14

17

22

MR. DAVID DANESH: Peter has the

13 calculations, so unfortunately --

MS. POVERMAN: But do you know what those

15 mesh infills are for? Are they to allow

16 ventilation, or are they for some other purpose?

MR. DAVID DANESH: I don't want to tell you

18 something that's not 100 percent accurate, so I'd

19 rather just ask the question for Peter, and he can 20 shoot you an email with the exact answer.

21 MS. POVERMAN: Okay.

MR. DAVID DANESH: Just to be fair.

MR. BOEHMER: All right. Now we're going

24 to get to the elevation that other people were

Page 37 1 the view of the sky from the neighboring home.

2 And what I mean by that is, as I stated

3 before, this area of the building that's a

4 three-story piece is about 5 feet from the property

5 line. It's set -- the dimensions are set because of

6 a requirement for the service doors that include a

7 stairwell and various other uses. I'm not sure what

8 all the other service doors are for. But there's

9 basically a sidewalk on this side. The sidewalk

10 continues around the other side and goes out to

11 Harvard Street.

12 What controls the view of the sky is 13 actually this line. And when you look at that

14 street section that they provided for tonight's

15 presentation, you can see that even looking at the

16 upper-story windows, this is really the biggest 17 determinate of how much sky you see. Again, shadows

8 are different from sky view, and as I said earlier,

19 the shadow impact is there. It's real. And moving

20 this is not really going to change that -- not

21 change the shadow impact. So anyway, that's --

MS. POVERMAN: Wait. Moving what is not qoing to change the shadow impact?

MR. BOEHMER: Moving this -- creating a

PROCEEDINGS Page 38 1 bigger setback there certainly is going to have a 2 minimal impact on the shadow. It has more impact on 3 just being able to look up at the sky. Whether the 4 sun is right there -- it actually wouldn't be there 5 for most of the year. MS. POVERMAN: Okay. MR. BOEHMER: So anyway, that's one. At a minimum, setback should be adequate 9 for an effective vegetative buffer, which is also 10 something the planning board recommended. The

11 planning board went on to recommend setting back far 12 enough for creation of usable open space for the 13 residents of 455. 14 Personally, I think that is really -- does 15 not -- I think that has a lot of down sides. It's a 16 very small building. It's in an urban environment. 17 I think having usable open space in the back might 18 impact the neighbor negatively by having people 19 hanging out back there. So my own opinion, as a 20 planner and architect, is that that doesn't help the 21 project very much.

Next comment is the rear stairwell should

Page 39 1 it, but I think it's doable. The rear stairwell 2 should be integrated into the main body of the 3 building, as opposed to a free-standing approach 4 that's currently depicted. And again, it's the 5 three-story facade closest to the neighbors that 6 controls the view to the sky, so the setback would So here's the stairwell that I'm talking

23 be integrated -- and I talked a little bit with

24 Peter about this -- sort of had a minor cow about

7 help that. 9 about. The way the plan works is it's a 10 double-loaded corridor that goes from this stairwell 11 up to another stairwell closer to the front of the 12 building. For planning purposes, on the first 13 floor, this stairwell is placed on the rear wall, 14 and so the stair continues up, creating the egress 15 path for the fourth floor. So my point is -- and I think I mentioned 16

17 the planning board made the same point -- if this 18 stair could be integrated into the main four-story 19 body of the building, then it would help on that 20 view of the sky from the Thorndike Street neighbors. The next point is the placement of the 22 fenestration in the new units should take existing

23 window locations in the neighboring existing home 24 into consideration in order to maximize privacy.

Page 40 So there's -- at this stage of this design,

2 there's a lot of flexibility about exactly where

3 these windows are, so I think that it would be

4 prudent to locate these windows in a way so you're

5 not staring directly across over into the neighbors'

6 windows across the way. There aren't tons of

7 windows in that building, so I think it would be

8 very easy to, you know, titrate (phonetic) the

9 location of these windows to help out the neighbors.

MS. POVERMAN: Do you have a picture of

11 what somebody would see coming down Thorndike? MR. BOEHMER: Yeah. There's a perspective.

13 Thanks for reminding me. Yeah, that's important

perspective. And this is -- remember, this is the

elevation that we talked about already, and I think

this is one that I think needs more articulation and

17 study.

18 I'll keep going in the report. I'll get to 19 some of the bigger conclusions at the end.

UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Is there an

21 elevation of the loading zone on Harvard?

MR. BOEHMER: I think it's just -- all it

23 is -- what it is is taking parking spaces, I'm

24 guessing for limited hours during the day. There's

10

1 an existing curb cut.

MR. ENGLER: Geoff Engler from SEB.

I don't think what you're looking for is an

4 elevation, per se, of the loading zone. I think

5 you're looking for, really, a two-dimensional plan,

6 as it's flat, so there's nothing -- there's no

7 elevation to look at. It's basically pavement.

UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pavement

that goes to a door?

MR. ENGLER: No.

11 MR. BOEHMER: No. It's just paintings on

12 the street.

13 MR. ENGLER: So one of the things that was

14 requested by the town and submitted, I think, a

couple weeks ago -- Polly would know better than ${\tt I}$

would, but we submitted a fully detailed loading

zone plan, which included dimensions and whatnot,

and that's part of the record.

MS. POVERMAN: Actually, one of the things

20 I wanted to clarify about is it was proposed that

the loading zone times be 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

22 I'm assuming that does not comport with town

quidelines about when loading zones can actually be

24 used, which I'm sure is way after 5:00 in the

1 morning.
2 MR. ENGLER: I think my client is flexible
3 on the time. But I think it's also important to
4 note that the loading zone is proposed not
5 specifically for this project, but other commercial

6 uses in the area, and so it's not specific to this 7 proposal.

And, frankly, some other projects, recently approved 40Bs, have no loading zones, some have

 $10\,$ loading zones on the property, some have loading

11 zones off the property. So it's been quite

17 that proposal.

12 inconsistent relative to what's been approved.

Our suggestion here is to have the loading 14 zone common to -- because of the way the curb cut 15 works now, it seems like it would work, and my 16 client's flexible relative to the time and use of

MS. POVERMAN: I just didn't want people to have heart attacks if they saw 5:00 a.m. written down somewhere.

21 MS. SELKOE: The traffic peer reviewer will 22 also be commenting on the loading zone.

23 MR. ENGLER: And maybe the confusion is 24 actually -- it's not a loading dock. Sometimes you Pages 42..43

1 that is a little more friendly to the neighboring
2 structures. Most of the buildings on the street are
3 shingles or clapboards.

4 My comment, though, was that while the 5 material change from brick to lap siding is

6 appropriate, care should be taken to provide a 7 suitable level of detail and to create an attractive

8 facade consistent with the homes on Thorndike

9 Street.

So moving on, the next category -- I'm going to not say much at all about vehicle circulation, since you do have a specialist coming in on that.

14 MS. POVERMAN: That's fine.

MR. BOEHMER: I'll just say a few things
about pedestrian access. Pedestrian access appears
to be -- pedestrian access to the building appears
to be limited to the primary residential entry on
the northwest corner of Harvard Street. So that's
where residents enter the building. They have their
own designated zone at that corner, as well as

22 egress along the Thorndike Street abutting property23 line. We talked about that. That's that stairwell.

24 Various other service doors open up onto the north

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1 hear where -- you know, actually, like, maybe a
2 distribution warehouse where trucks are actually
3 pulling up at a raised level. This is where, you
4 know, a truck would pull up and -- it's effectively
5 a parking spot, but it's designated as bigger and
6 it's designated for that particular use during
7 certain points of the day.
8 MR. DANNY DANESH: My name is Danny Danesh.

This is going where it's currently a curb
cut, and it's not, you know, a dock where there's
going to be any kind of, you know, big forklifts
going in. It's just turning the curb cuts that are
now used to go in and out of the restaurant into two
parking spaces that are meters for the town. And
like Geoff said, we're flexible on hours. Thank

16 you.

17 MS. POVERMAN: Mr. Boehmer? 18 MR. BOEHMER: Okay. So one more comment

19 about this. I want to make it clear I think -- as I

20 said, three of the elevations are clad in brick.

21 This elevation is -- the proposal is to do a

22 clapboard siding. I think it would be a 23 cementitious clapboard, but it's a lap siding. I

24 think that's a good idea. I think it's a material

Page 45 1 and east perimeters of the building within that

 $2\,$ 5-foot setback. Generally speaking, it's noted

3 elsewhere, the pedestrian experience would be

5 and Harvard Street.

The next thing I'll touch on briefly, then
we can zoom to the end here, is the integration of
the building and site, essentially -- including but
not limited to preservation of existing street tree
cover.

4 enhanced with increased setbacks both on Thorndike

The current site is fully occupied by

commercial use, including parking directly on

Harvard Street, a small paved dining area on

Harvard, and paving fully covering the remainder of

the open site. The proposed structure eliminates

visible parking and much of the existing large curb

cuts on Harvard Street and Thorndike, and the

proposed use extends the active commercial use along

Harvard. And that goes back to what I was saying at

the beginning. The notion of continuing that more

21 coherent approach to the development on Harvard 22 Street compared to what happens when you're on this 23 side of the building is, I think, a sound idea from

24 an urban planning perspective.

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1 It appears that an existing street tree

2 will have to be removed to accommodate the new

3 structure, as well as a fire hydrant and a utility

4 pole. It doesn't appear that there are any other

5 existing trees on the site, and it's not clear from

6 the drawings if there are any trees proposed in the

7 new plan. And I make a comment later about getting

8 a landscape plan.
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9 A few other comments: We saw there was a 10 lighting plan that was submitted in response to the 11 planning board.

I'll move on to other design-related

13 considerations. The floor plans in the submission
14 include relatively detailed, so-called conceptual -15 you can get a very good idea of the unit layouts
16 from it. It seems likely that the units are able to
17 conform with accessibility codes. Note that the
18 building does have fewer than 20 rental units, which
19 exempts it from Group 2 requirements, so this
20 building is not required to have fully accessible
21 units.

However, it is an elevatored building in a rental property, and all units are required to meet Group 1 level of accessibility. And my review of 1 quickly to sort of my summary of the points that 2 really, to me, are the most important. It may not 3 be completely thorough.

But I say that, from the architect's

5 perspective, the more detail and articulation of the 6 primary building elevations, particularly Thorndike 7 Street and the exposed north-facing elevation 8 fronting the adjacent parking lot, basically 9 treating and really understanding the degree to

which those are part of the public realm. And I've

11 already outlined some of the strategies before.

Details of several specific elevation
components I think we need to know. I mentioned
many already: the garage door, the metal screening,
exactly what is this material that's called out as
masonry in the drawings.

Increased setback on Thorndike Street to tie the building into the residential neighborhood and enhance the pedestrian experience that's along here.

21 Increased ground level setback to the 22 neighbor on Thorndike Street. And I'll repeat 23 again, this reviewer doesn't believe that the 24 creation of usable outdoor space is necessary or

Page 47 1 the plans certainly -- they indicate that there's 20

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A couple of questions are -- I wasn't able
to tell how trash would be handled.

Another point is the rooftop elevator
extension, penthouses, mechanical equipment
screening, etc. are minimally depicted in the
submitted drawings. These will be visible and
should be detailed.
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2 enough dimension that they'll be able to do that.

10 A couple other points we always talk about 11 are construction management plans. A question about 12 will there be a ground-mounted transformer, I don't 13 know if you're at the level of knowing that at this 14 point.

MS. POVERMAN: If we have future elevations, it would be great not to put obstructive and nonexistent trees in the way.

18 MR. BOEHMER: Well, I don't know if that 19 tree is there.

20 MR. DAVID DANESH: I have a photograph on 21 my phone I can show you.

22 MS. POVERMAN: I've said my piece. I think 23 the developer knows what I mean.

MR. BOEHMER: So I'm going to move very

1 particularly beneficial.

Next is a landscape plan that includes an appropriate level of screening, location of street trees, placement of transformer, normal things that you learn in design development.

Consideration of increasing usable sidewalk space on Harvard Street. And I think that argument is also -- well, we already talked about the safety concerns, but I think, also, increasing the variety of potential tenants for the building by creating a potentially habitable sidewalk space is a good thing.

Details of screening strategy of visible
mechanical equipment, and that, I'll reemphasize.

Again, it is quite surprising how visible this
building actually is. And I think the first
experience coming from Boston is you don't want to
see all the mechanical equipment up on the roof.

19 I mention again quickly the integration of 20 the rear stairwell.

21 And two other things: careful design of 22 the elevation facing Thorndike -- the Thorndike 23 neighbor. That includes placement of windows, 24 details of any buffering that the neighbor might

- 05/15/2017 PROCEEDINGS Page 50 1 want or that the proponent believes is necessary, 1 if most -- maybe 20 years down the road, if most 2 and developing the architectural detailing with that 2 buildings are 45, 48, 50 feet tall, it might not 3 kind of language that's more consistent with the 3 even come up. But I will say, I guess, like the 4 homes on Thorndike Street. 4 planning board, I don't think the height of the 5 building, per se, is an issue. And, again, we've And then one last comment is, which you've 6 heard before, which is ensuring that the floor-to-6 reviewed together many other developments on 7 floor height is minimized. This -- I think it's 7 Harvard -- or several other developments on Harvard 8 quite reasonable. In this building they're showing 8 Street. 9 10 foot 8 for these residential floors, but the top MS. PALERMO: You have. I know. 10 floor jumped up to, I think, 11 foot something. I Okay. So as we think about what the 11 didn't know why exactly. 11 ultimate usable square footage is going to be in the MR. DAVID DANESH: (Inaudible.) 12 building, you recognize at some point in your report MS. POVERMAN: Could you say that -- I'm that if a setback from both Harvard Street and 14 sure the --Thorndike Street -- more than is currently planned, 15 MR. BOEHMER: I think what he's saying is which is none -- is required for the project, that 16 the roof is -- has thickness and probably some taper that will reduce the amount of usable square footage 17 to it so the ceiling heights were consistent. in the building. 18 MR. DAVID DANESH: It's 9 feet inside, 18 MR. BOEHMER: It would. And I should say 19 floor to floor. 19 that in my mind, I would prioritize the setback. I 20 MR. BOEHMER: Okay. My comment stands. I 21 think, in general -- I don't think it's really in 22 your interest to really have the greatest floor-to-23 floor height. Obviously there are reasons for 24 making the units more marketable to have generous 24 Page 51 1 ceiling heights, so that's the tradeoff. MS. POVERMAN: Thank you. 3 MS. PALERMO: Thank you. I do have a few 5 questions. 5 tables, for example.

First of all, thank you, Mr. Boehmer. Once 7 again you have given us a very thorough and 8 insightful analysis of the design of this particular 9 building and the setting in which it is potentially 10 going to be located. 11 I did want to zero in on a couple of 12 things, and I'll start with the last thing you 13 mention, which is the floor-to-floor height. And is 14 it -- I take from that -- and correct me if this is 15 wrong -- that you have some concerns about the 16 height of the building itself. 17 MR. BOEHMER: Well, not really. I mean, 18 not in the big picture. I mean, not the way it 19 relates to Harvard Street, and, you know, given

20 where it is and given other developments and looking 21 ahead to future development on Harvard Street. I think my point is that I don't think 23 there's any value in it being any bigger than it has 24 to be, I think. You know, 10 years down the road,

think of the two setbacks, knowing that they each could -- or would impact the square footage in the building, I think the Thorndike Street setback is more important than the Harvard Street setback. I think there are other architectural ways Page 53 1 to deal with it. In fact, the plans already show 2 some pretty substantial recessed openings -- at 3 least that's my reading of the plans -- that 4 could -- that may already be adequate for small cafe But for me, think it's the -- the Thorndike 7 Street side I think is the one that needs the most 8 attention, and that has more to do with the -- you 9 know, with a smoother transition into that 10 residential neighborhood. MS. PALERMO: Okay. Before I ask my next 11 12 question, I will say I'm disappointed Peter can't be here tonight. And, Nick, I'm assuming you weren't involved in the actual design that we're seeing now. 15 You're substituting -- the person reporting on the 16 project? 17 MR. GRIFFIN: I've been a little bit 18 involved, but not as much as Peter. MS. PALERMO: Well, I'm going to ask you to 20 take copious notes, because we just heard a couple 21 of things that, I think, I want to be reassured are

going to be conveyed to the architect who is doing

24 not here tonight, especially for this presentation,

the design. As I said, it's disappointing that he's

1 because this is his opportunity to hear from the

- 2 peer reviewer while we're all here and from the
- 3 board and from the neighbors. And I hope you take $\,$
- 4 copious notes.
- 5 MR. ENGLER: May I?
- 6 MS. PALERMO: Well, I'm actually still
- 7 asking Mr. Boehmer questions.
- 8 MR. ENGLER: I just want to comment on
- $\ensuremath{\mathbf{9}}$ that. We made it very clear to the town that Peter
- 10 could not attend tonight, and we were investigating
- 11 other dates. And the town and we agreed that we'll
- 12 move forward.
- I would also suggest that this is a long
- 14 process. Peter and Mr. Boehmer -- it's not a
- 15 one-shot deal. We're going to have to revise the
- 16 plans. Mr. Boehmer is going to have another chance
- 17 to look at them. There's all sorts of collaboration
- 18 and communication that goes on in a go-forward basis
- 19 from tonight, so it's not like -- Peter, first of
- 20 all, will have the benefit of Mr. Boehmer's written
- 21 response, but then he's going to have the benefit of
- 22 my interpretation, of Nick's interpretation. The
- 23 planning department typically sends out a summary.
- 24 Believe me when I say the comments that
 - Page 55
- 1 Mr. Boehmer has communicated tonight are heard loud
- 2 and clear amongst my client and others, so I don't
- 3 think the board should be concerned that Peter's $\,$
- 4 absence is going to in any way negatively impact the
- 5 seriousness that we take the comments or ability to
- 6 listen to those.
- 7 MS. PALERMO: Thank you for your
- 8 reassurance. That's what I need to hear.
- 9 MS. POVERMAN: There is also the
- 10 transcript.
- 11 MS. PALERMO: As Geoff said, it's an
- 12 interactive process, and watching is not the whole
- 13 thing. But in any event, I've made my point.
- 14 Nobody asked me what I thought about Peter not being
- 15 here, but I don't represent the town. I'm just the
- 16 ZBA.
- 17 So in any event, moving on. So you've
- 18 given priority to the setbacks as opposed to the
- 19 height. And as far as setbacks go, your priority is
- 20 the setback on Thorndike Street as opposed to
- 21 Harvard. But, obviously, ideally there would be a
- 22 setback on both.
- 23 You also noted that there is no landscaping
- 24 plan, but you specifically said that they need to

- Page 56 1 produce one that would include an appropriate level
- 2 of screening, location of street trees, and
- 3 placement of a transformer, if required. But then
- 4 you said that you saw no benefit to any open space
- 5 beyond that.
- 6 MR. BOEHMER: Usable -- just usable open
- 7 space.
- 8 MS. SELKOE: The definition for usable open
- 9 space in our zoning bylaw is you have to have
- 10 minimum dimensions of at least 15 feet by 15 feet.
- .1 MS. PALERMO: Okay. So basically your
- 12 opinion is there would be no benefit to creating a
- 13 15 foot by 15 foot usable open space for this
 - project.
- MR. BOEHMER: And that's based on where the
- 16 building is, the number of units in the building,
- 17 the proximity of lots of public open space. So, you
 - 8 know, it's complicated.
- 19 But to the other point, the other
- 20 landscaping that's used for screening, the reason
- 21 that -- in my opinion, that study should be tied in
- 22 to the elevation studies. Because, as I was saying
- $23\,$ before, the elevation along -- the planning board
- 24 made the point about that elevation. What they
 - Page 57
- 1 thought is that that should be pulled back and plant
 2 buffer, plant trees there.
- 3 MS. POVERMAN: I'm sorry. What should be
- 4 pulled back?
- 5 MR. BOEHMER: That the building should be
- 6 pulled back.
- 7 MS. PALERMO: That's where they're looking
- 8 for a setback, and you prioritized Thorndike, not
- 9 that.
- 10 MR. BOEHMER: Absolutely. And the reason
- 11 is that -- and it doesn't mean that I don't think it
- 12 could be or that the building wouldn't benefit from
- 13 plantings. For example, it is a west-facing
- 14 elevation. Planting deciduous trees is a great way
- 15 to deal with solar gain. So there are reasons to
- 16 put trees there. And there may be parts of the
- 17 elevation that you would want to screen and other
- 18 parts that, because they have an adequate level of
- 19 detailing and interest, you wouldn't screen them.
- 20 So to me it's an integrated package.
- 21 What I've addressed tonight is mainly
- 22 the -- you know, the building elevations, setbacks.
- 23 But I think that it's a combined discussion.
- 24 They're not found independently.

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            MS. PALERMO: And what about the wall that
 2 is facing the neighbor? Do you recommend any
 3 setback of that wall?
            MR. BOEHMER: Well, actually, in my
 5 prioritized setbacks, this is actually number two.
 6 So I put this one in front of the Harvard Street one
 7 because, again, I think a lot of the appeal and
8 usefulness of the Harvard Street elevation --
9 there's plenty of other buildings that are already
10 at essentially a zero setback on Harvard Street.
11 So, you know, the Harvard Street, I think, is
12 working quite well. I think it could work better.
13 And I'm not talking about safety, in particular.
14 I'm more about function. This elevation I would
15 definitely put in front of the Harvard Street, for
16 no other reason, to provide screening. This might
17 be an elevation that would be perceived as
18 beneficial to both the proponent and the neighbor,
19 to provide landscaping there. And right now there
20 really isn't enough space. It's like 5 foot 1 on
21 that side.
            MS. PALERMO: One more question. You
23 mentioned in your report that there might be an
24 opportunity to use bays above the ground level to
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 1 bays -- it's possible that you could create -- these
 2 can even stay where they are in that plane, but it
 3 backs up from there.
            And, you know, the things that I'm not
 5 responsible for, but these guys are, is, well, what
 6 does that do to the parking plan? I mean, there are
 7 lots of things that that impacts, which is why I
  propose it as something to study.
            My opinion is this elevation needs help,
  and there are a number of ways to do that. And bays
11 would be a very easy way to create a nice pattern,
  create a scale that's similar to the smaller-scale
13 residential. There are other ways. There are --
14 you know, there are datum lines. You know, the
15 cornice lines of a lot of the buildings on that
   street are pretty consistent, actually, so carrying
   some of that detailing across at that level can
18 help.
19
            You know, essentially, both between the
20 setback and increased detailing and sensitivity to
21 the scale of the detailing, that's about tying it in
22 to the neighborhood. There are no buildings this
23 big in the neighborhood, so really the gain is to
24 really make a nice transition.
            MS. POVERMAN: Anything else, Lark?
1
            MS. PALERMO: No. Thank you very much. As
 3 always, very helpful.
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1 not lose as much square footage in the unit, but to
 2 enhance the pedestrian experience.
            Where would you suggest bays could
 4 potentially be located if the developer --
            MR. BOEHMER: Thank you. This is the one
 6 that I think, probably for a lot of people, is the
 7 most stark-looking elevation, particularly when you
8 look in the foreground and you see the high level of
9 detail in the existing, you know, smaller-scale,
10 wood-framed buildings.
11
            UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: What's a
12 bay?
13
            MS. PALERMO: A bay window, a protruding
14 window. Sort of classic Victorian --
15
            MR. BOEHMER: And I think that --
            MS. POVERMAN: Is that clear? Do you
16
17 understand now what a bay window is?
18
            UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.
19
            MR. BOEHMER: So what I was saying, and,
20 again, this is -- you know, I'm not the architect.
21 But if I were studying ways to create interest in
22 this elevation, there would be a number of things I
23 would look at. And I think I mention most of them
24 in the report, which is -- what I'm saying is
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            MS. POVERMAN: Chris?
            MR. HUSSEY: I think you've done a good
   job, Cliff. I tend to agree about the cornice at
 7 the top. Dropping that down to the top of the third
 8 level makes some sense, and also reducing the floor-
   to-floor height. I don't think marketing is really
10 a big issue in this small building. They'll rent.
11 So I'd like to see a reduction in the floor-to-floor
12 height to get some reduction of the building
13 overall.
14
            And as far as the setbacks are concerned, I
15 think I agree with you that the setback -- the rear,
16 adjacent to the residential building, is much more
   important than any setback along Harvard Street. I
18
   think the Harvard Street elevation is fine.
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I was wondering about the possibility of a

MR. BOEHMER: It could be. I was almost

20 setback at the Thorndike Street elevation only at

22 the question for the architect, and do you think

23 that would be useful?

the first-floor level. Would that be possible is

1 thinking the other way, but that -- you know,

- 2 pushing back and letting the upper part stand out a
- 3 little bit.
- 4 But, you know, I think the most useful
- 5 thing -- getting back to that landscape plan, I
- 6 think the way you can understand the transition into
- 7 the neighborhood is as soon as you get past this
- 8 site, all the neighbors have front yards, so there
- 9 is yard space. So understanding -- I'm not saying
- 10 in any way -- and I think I made this clear -- that
- 11 that building does not need to set back to that
- 12 level. It's not a single-family home. So that
- 13 doesn't make a lot of sense to me.
- 14 On the other hand, tying it -- you know,
- 15 creating some continuity with some of the benefits
- 16 of that green space that those front yards provide.
- 17 And that's actually through the landscape plan that
- 18 you can show that, much like the JCHE development.
- 19 I don't know if you remember the long tie-in along
- 20 the entire stretch of Harvard Street just a little
- 21 ways up from this project. It's really important.
- 21 ways ap 110m chizs project. 10 s 1early impered
- 22 And that was actually tied together with the
- 23 landscape plan.
- MR. HUSSEY: Thank you. That's it.

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- MS. POVERMAN: To tie into your comment,
- 2 Chris -- so one of the issues I have had and a lot
- 3 of us have commented on is the stark nature of the
- 4 building. So if you have an overhang Chris, how
- ${\tt 5}\,$ would that affect the stark/institutional nature of
- 6 the building? How would it soften it, other than
- 7 giving up more room on Thorndike, although that has
- 8 value in and of itself?
- 9 MR. HUSSEY: I think that's all it would
- 10 do.
- 11 MS. POVERMAN: Cliff, do you think it would
- 12 have any softening value?
- 13 MR. BOEHMER: To do which?
- 14 MS. POVERMAN: To have the setback on the
- 15 first floor but not on any other floor.
- 16 MR. BOEHMER: I think it's worth looking
- 17 at. I mean, I think that -- I think most of the
- 18 issue could actually be solved by just pulling the
- 19 whole thing back a little ways and just making
- 20 better articulation of the facade.
- 21 I mean, you see they're already -- if you
- 22 read the -- I'm sure you have, but the materials
- 23 point out that a lot of kind of traditional
- 24 detailing -- they're talking about cast stone on the

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- 1 windows. It's not designed like a sleek modern $\,$
- 2 building. They are trying to make an updated
- 3 version of a very traditional masonry -- idea of
- 4 masonry with an attic story.
- I think that -- and especially because it's
- 6 not -- especially, there's only two stories of
- 7 masonry. There's a tremendous amount, just sort of
- 8 detailing of the masonry. And they do have a
- 9 soldier course. And there are -- they started doing
- 10 this, I think. It just isn't adequate, in my
- 11 opinion. There's a -- this is, I think, meant to be
- 12 a soldier course.
- 13 MS. POVERMAN: I don't know what that
- 14 means.
- 15 MR. BOEHMER: Rather than brick running the
- 16 long way, they run vertically. So it's a way to
- 17 create visual interest in a -- and there are all
- 18 kinds of corbeling and other brick detailing that
-
- 19 are very affordable but very effective ways of 20 really livening up a brick facade.
- 21 MS. POVERMAN: So some of my comments just
- 22 repeat what people have said. My view is that the
- 23 setbacks are a very big problem on Thorndike, and
- 24 part of that does have to do with just the safety of
- Page 65 1 it. As you pointed out, the angle coming out, and
- 2 it is a small sidewalk, and it's just too small in
- 3 terms of getting squished -- a squished feeling, if
- 4 nothing else. And the setback, I think, with the
- 5 neighbor on Thorndike is also something that needs
- 6 relief.
- 7 And so, as the planning board and my other
- 8 members -- I think this is two of the most critical
- 9 elements in terms of actual -- well, two of the
- 10 critical elements that really need to be addressed
- 11 stylistically.
- 12 And I agree with just about every comment
- 13 that's been made here. I think there are some
- 14 really positive things about the building that you
- 15 detailed, and with tweaking, I think it could be
- 16 made into a very nice building. And I was really
- .7 struck by what you said -- because I hadn't noticed
- 18 it -- about the impact that the building has coming
- 19 from just about every direction. And that, I think,
- 20 makes it sort of especially important, the
- 21 opportunity you have to make a really, really nice
- 22 building here. And I know you guys take that
- 23 seriously, because of the steps you've already
- 24 taken.

Page 66 In terms of facing the Starbucks side, I 2 think that we're going to be getting into some 3 details environmentally which may affect what's 4 going on there, although we don't have to deal with 5 that now. So I'm not -- like I said, I agree with the 7 architectural -- I have nothing to add 8 architecturally to what's been said, but let me just 9 look for a second and see if there's anything else I 10 have to add, and my colleagues can see if they have 11 anything as well. I think that's it for this. I'm going to 13 take about a two-minute break before we continue. 14 It's going to be a pretty long evening because we're 15 going to go into environmental, so if people want to

18 another -- do you prefer to get the building 19 comments in?

20 MS. PALERMO: I think we need all the 21 reports in.

16 talk about building, they have to wait through

17 environmental and then comment. Unless I have

22 MS. POVERMAN: All right. We are going to 23 adjourn for a few minutes. People can get water or

24 whatever they want. We are off the record.

Page 67 (Recess taken from 8:29 p.m. to 8:38 p.m.) 1 MS. POVERMAN: All right we are 3 reassembling. The fun is over. We are reconvening 4 the hearing. We are now going to hear from John 6 Chambers, the environmental peer reviewer. If you 7 could please come up and introduce yourself. MR. CHAMBERS: My name is John Chambers. 9 I'm with Fuss & O'Neill Consulting Engineers out of 10 Boston, and I'm a licensed site professional in 11 Massachusetts. 12 Do you just want an overview of our 13 findings, basically? 14 MS. POVERMAN: Yes. And then we'll ask you 15 5,000 questions. 16 MR. CHAMBERS: All right. That sounds 17 great. 18 So basically -- we basically looked at the 19 site to determine if the environmental conditions of 20 the site would impact the development, and we're 21 going to break into really two parts: on the 22 property at 455 Harvard Street, and then the 23 neighboring property where Christo's dry cleaner

Page 68 On the property, basically it was a gas 2 station from the 1930s to 2006. The gas tanks and 3 the gas station have been removed. It does not look 4 like there's substantial contamination left on the 5 property. The previous consultant characterized it 6 as background, which would indicate that there's no requirement to clean it up, even though there is low levels of contamination there. The contamination 9 really -- I don't see it posing a risk to the occupants of the site with what's on the site. And the only issue you would see in that is if you move background material to another site, it becomes regulated, and so there's some kind of soil management of it as a low-level contaminate soil. That's really the only issue to the on-site soil that we saw. 17 The other issue, though, is one that's kind 18 of an evolving issue with the Christo's dry cleaners

of an evolving issue with the Christo's dry cleaners at the neighboring property. So there was a solvent release at that property that is currently being treated on that site. In the last decade or so, releases of solvents have become more of an issue for the Department of Environmental Protection in that they can create vapors and get sucked into

1 neighboring buildings.

And so we basically recommend -- we did not 3 do a deep-dive on the neighboring property, but we 4 would recommend the developer look at that issue and 5 really assess if the change in use to the 6 residential is going to pose an exposure risk of sucking in the vapors from the neighboring property. There's several ways that someone could do that. They could look at the existing data that's 10 been done on the neighboring property and then have 11 a -- you know, an expert rule out that there's an issue of migration to the property. There's also some fairly cost-effective things they can do on their own building to just prevent it without worrying about what's happening next door. But that's basically what we recommend as the issue, 17 just to protect users and occupants of the building. MS. PALERMO: Can I just ask you where 19 exactly the Christo's dry cleaning is located? 20 MR. CHAMBERS: Yeah. It's right behind the Starbucks that's right next door on Harvard Street. MS. SELKOE: It's not a dry cleaners

MS. POVERMAN: Yes, it is.

23 currently.

24 sits.

1 low-level contamination in it. So it's not a risk,

Page 70 MS. PALERMO: So it's in the same building 2 as Starbucks? MR. CHAMBERS: Facing from Harvard Street, 4 it's the property to the left. MS. PALERMO: Okay. MR. CHAMBERS: I can go into more detail if 7 you want. That's basically our report, is that, you 8 know, those issues are -- they're really -- you 9 know, technically, I presume that the owners of 10 455 Harvard don't have liability for the neighboring 11 property, you know, unless there's something that's 12 not obvious here, so the neighbor has to clean that 13 up. 14 But because those vapors exist there -- it

15 appears they exist there -- a large building next 16 door, very close to it, due to the heating systems, 17 basically -- when a heating system kicks in, it 18 reduces the pressure inside the building and it can

19 draw vapors in from the ground. So if I was the 20 developer of the building, I would make sure there's

21 some mechanism to prevent that from happening, is

22 effectively what I'm saying.

23 MS. POVERMAN: So I have more detailed 24 questions, so you may want to get into more detail Page 72

2 necessarily, to the town. It's a risk to the

3 developer in that in moving that soil somewhere,

4 you're moving contaminated material, even though

5 it's referred to as background in the investigations

6 that have been done to date there.

MS. PALERMO: So it increases their 8 disposal cost.

MR. CHAMBERS: Exactly.

MS. POVERMAN: What about the neighbors? 11 Is there a risk to the neighbors as it's taken out? MR. CHAMBERS: No. Not really. I mean,

13 you know, if you let it sit in a soil pile on the site for a long period of time, it could pose a

risk. But, again, you actually have to ingest it.

They have to eat the dirt over a long period of time to have a health effect.

18 The DEP has put in these background 19 regulations basically because a lot of urban soil

throughout Massachusetts and other northeast states

21 have some -- you know, coal ash that was dumped all 22 over the place have these contaminates in it, former

23 gas stations have these low levels. So it's a very

24 ubiquitous contaminate. But the methods that they

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1 before we do that. I'm going to let my colleagues 2 go first.

But you do make two recommendations in your 4 paper, one of which is to have a management plan to 5 manage contaminated soil, and you don't go into any 6 details here about what that consists of, so if you 7 could address that.

MR. CHAMBERS: I can address that, yeah.

So, effectively, the contamination on the 10 site, on the property at 455 Harvard Street, is kind 10 facility.

11 of low level. It's basically polyaromatic

12 hydrocarbons. It's materials that you ingest in a

13 lot of soil over the long term that can cause health

14 effects. So when you build on that and you cap

15 it -- like, this entire site would be capped with

16 either landscaping or building or foundation or

17 sidewalk or things like that -- it really poses no

18 risk to the users.

The only risk is really in what you do with

20 the soil. So if they are going to move it around

21 the site and cap it and, at the end of the day, be

22 done with it, it won't pose a risk to any users of

23 the site. If they take that background material

24 off-site and move it somewhere else, it does have

Page 73 1 usually use to treat it is exactly what they're

2 doing on the property: capping it and covering it

3 so that people can't dig into it and eat it.

And the question of what environmental

5 conditions impact the development, it's really, as

6 your colleague said, an issue of disposal. It's an

7 issue of whatever soil comes out of that site

8 shouldn't be trucked off as clean fill somewhere

9 else. It should be disposed of in a licensed

11

MS. POVERMAN: Lark, do you have questions?

MS. PALERMO: Well, as I said, I wanted to

13 know where the dry cleaner was located, and you 14 answered that for me.

15

You read the file on the release of VOCs by 16 the dry cleaner?

17 MR. CHAMBERS: Yes.

MS. PALERMO: And is there any potential of 18

19 those VOCs migrating onto this property?

MR. CHAMBERS: The risk is a migration in 21 air. So the contaminate that's released there is a

22 chlorinated solvent. In the old days, when you

23 walked by a dry cleaner, you could smell that kind

24 of sweet smell. That's the contaminate going into

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                                              Page 74
 1 the air.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Okay. So your summary
 2
                                                         2 starts out by saying that the site is next to a
            So what can happen is when it's in the
                                                         3 site -- so the Christo's site -- at which there had
 3 ground, in groundwater or soil, it can -- it
 4 volatilizes into the air and in the ground. And
                                                         4 been subsurface soil groundwater and soil gas
 5 buildings can -- a building system -- they call it a
                                                         5 contamination by volatile organic compounds. So
 6 "chimney effect" -- can basically depressurize the
                                                         6 that's the --
 7 building's interior air relative to the ground. And
                                                                     MR. CHAMBERS: That's the chlorinated
8 if there's cracks in the foundation, it can go into
                                                         8 solvent.
9 the interior air.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Okay. So you say that it's
10
            And so that's something that environmental
                                                        10 not currently a disposal site. But based on your
11 protection agencies have become much more aware of
                                                        11 review, "soil management in construction may be
12 over the last decade, and typically, there's things
                                                            subject to additional regulation." What do you mean
13 you can do to prevent that exposure. You can
                                                            by that? You say "regulation" rather than
14 either, you know, study it and make sure it's not
                                                            "management."
15 migrating there, which is kind of a science project,
                                                        15
                                                                     MR. CHAMBERS: Which section?
16 or you can put things on the building; like a vapor
                                                        16
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Sure. The second page.
17 barrier, for instance, on the building. It's
                                                        17 It's the top paragraph.
18 something people often do nowadays to mitigate that
                                                        18
                                                                     MR. CHAMBERS: Okay. Page 2, the top --
19 issue. And to me it's a best management practice if
                                                           okay. So the site is 455 Harvard Street. That is
                                                        19
20 you're that close to a solvent release site.
                                                           not currently a listed DEP site. So basically, when
21
            MS. PALERMO: So you, as a best management
                                                        21 the tanks were pulled, the LSP at the time concluded
22 practice, would recommend a vapor barrier?
                                                        22 that the materials left were background, and
            MR. CHAMBERS: What I recommend -- I didn't
                                                        23 therefore no additional regulation was necessary.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: So when you say, however,
24 want to design it for them, but what I recommended
                                              Page 75
                                                                                                       Page 77
1 is that they come back to you with some answer as to
                                                         1 based on your -- "soil managed in construction may
 2 how they were going to address that.
                                                         2 be subject to additional regulation," what do you
            Maybe they want to do a deep dive into the
 4 neighboring investigation that's been done and come
                                                                     MR. CHAMBERS: Basically, what I mean is
 5 back and have a licensed site professional, you
                                                         5 when -- currently on the site the LSP came to the
                                                         6 conclusion that --
 6 know, say -- have enough study to say it's not
7 migrating there.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Excuse me. Could you please
            We couldn't tell from reading the file if
                                                         8 be quiet. Thank you.
9 they had closed that area. It appears that they're
                                                                     Okay.
10 still looking at that.
                                                                     MR. CHAMBERS: The previous consultant
                                                        10
11
            And then on the alternative, if you don't
                                                        11 concluded that the soil on the site was not
12 want to go that way, is some kind of -- there's
                                                        12 required, under the Massachusetts contingency plan,
13 multiple building systems. The simplest one is a
                                                            which is the law regulating whether you have to
                                                        14 investigate and remediate this. Under that set of
14 vapor barrier, but there's other ones too that they
15 can choose from. And my recommendation would be,
                                                        15 regulations, there's no work required currently for
16 you know, to make sure that is dealt with so that
                                                        16 the site.
17 the occupants of the building are not exposed to
                                                        17
                                                                     However, when the site changes use in
18 that, if it exists.
                                                        18 construction, that background material -- so
19
            MS. PALERMO: Okay. Thank you.
                                                        19 background is basically a category under the state
20
            MS. POVERMAN: Chris?
                                                           regulations that if you find low-level contaminates
21
            MR. HUSSEY: No questions.
                                                            that are typically of what would be around there
            MS. POVERMAN: I have some questions. I do
                                                        22 anyway from kind of the urban fill that's there, you
```

23 not have the beginning knowledge that Lark has.

MR. CHAMBERS: Okay.

23 can claim it's background and not have to do

24 anything with it there.

Page 78 However, it you take that low-level 2 contamination and put it on another site, it's no 3 longer background. Now it's regulated as release 4 because you're taking contaminated material and 5 depositing it somewhere else. So that's -- what I 6 mean is that's where it becomes regulated. And so 7 basically, you know, good environmental practice 8 will require them to manage that soil as a 9 contaminant, not as clean soil. MS. POVERMAN: Okay. So you're referring 10 11 to what Lark --MR. CHAMBERS: Yeah, that's basically what 13 I'm referring to in that. MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Now, in your report 15 you say that the -- I guess the statement was 16 looking into whether or not parcels nearby Christo's 17 had been affected by -- what is the word -- vapor 18 migration --19 MR. CHAMBERS: Correct. 20 MS. POVERMAN: -- on Thorndike. Do you 21 know what's happened to those properties? MR. CHAMBERS: I don't. This is kind of 23 the nature -- we could certainly dig much deeper 24 into it, but my understanding is -- I mean, it's

4 Christo's, but this could change that, potentially, 5 and cause it to go into the air and have people 6 exposed to it. So that's where -- you know, someone in my 8 field would go look into that, and you can either 9 take the assessment route and try and determine 10 how -- is that problem really there, or you can take 11 the remediation route and just address it like it is 12 there, whether it's there or not, and eliminate the 13 risk. 14 MS. POVERMAN: So assuming someone took the 15 proactive route and just said, okay, we'll see what's going to happen and take care of it, what 17 possible risk would there be to surrounding 18 properties if, say, soil -- or digging occurred, which might increase the vapor migration risk to 20 neighbors? 21 MR. CHAMBERS: The issue is not -- so at 22 Christo's, the chlorinated solvent releases into the 23 ground. Twenty years ago, our assessments were very 24 good at how far it went in groundwater, how far it Page 81 1 went to soil. I'm confident that part has been 2 addressed. What they've been finding is that in the

1 actually change the profile where it's more likely

3 right now there's a solvent that's only at

2 that things would get sucked into the air. So maybe

Page 79 1 kind of an evolution of -- there's something 2 referred to as a "vapor intrusion issue" related to 3 any volatile compounds. So gasoline is a volatile 4 compound which, released in high levels, it can 5 volatilize, and that's what you smell at the pump. 6 And chlorinated solvents is another category of 7 compounds that dry cleaners use that have similar 8 properties that can volatilize and get into air. 9 So over the, you know, 10, 15 years, that 10 has become a much more aware issue where -- you 11 know, 20 years ago when I started in this business, 12 people weren't too worried about it. Now they're 13 much more concerned. 14 It looks to me like the state has decided 15 that there is a solvent release at Christo's that is 16 existing there, and they're saying, we'd like to 17 take a harder look at the neighboring properties. 18 It does not appear they've completed that work yet. 19 And that's why from perspective, reviewing it, I 20 can't tell you whether there's really a vapor issue 21 in the neighborhood or not. But what I can say is that when you put a

23 building like this on a property with the HVAC

24 systems and pressurizing the internal air, it can

9 an issue or not. MS. PALERMO: In other words, digging on 10 11 our site is not an issue with respect to the VOCs 12 that are --13 $\ensuremath{\mathsf{MR}}\xspace$. CHAMBERS: In the soil and groundwater 14 samples that were taken on 455 Harvard Street, there was -- you know, there was not a lot of looking for the chlorinated solvents, but in the couple samples they did look for it, they did not find it. So it doesn't appear that this material is sitting in the 19 soil groundwater. It appears as though that -- you know, is 21 it a potential that, you know, putting a building 22 there could cause vapors to migrate from that site

23 or not? It appears that the DEP is already looking

24 at that. They're already looking at neighboring

4 vapor phase, it migrates in kind of odd ways at

7 it appears to me they haven't completed their

5 times. So that appears to me about -- is the issue

6 that's being looked at at that site right now, and

8 assessment as to whether that site really would pose

 $1\,$ houses to sample to see if that's an issue so, you

- 2 know -- and they typically target residences for
- 3 that kind of thing. So this becoming a residential
- 4 property and being so close to the release, I think
- 5 it's prudent to address that issue one way or
- 6 another: either rule it out that it hasn't
- 7 migrated, which may well be true, or eliminate the
- 8 potential for it to migrate in there at all.
- 9 MS. POVERMAN: Right. As you might expect,
- 10 this is the first time I've dealt with this issue.
- 11 MR. CHAMBERS: It's definitely an evolving
- 12 issue.
- 13 MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Relating to
- 14 groundwater samples, there was a comment that in
- 15 2003, five soil samples and one groundwater sample
- 16 were done by FSL -- which I assume was the owner's
- 17 environmental --
- 18 MS. PALERMO: -- LSP.
- 19 MR. CHAMBERS: Yeah. That was the
- 20 consultant when they pulled the tanks out in 2006, I
- 21 believe.
- 22 MS. POVERMAN: -- for laboratory analysis,
- 23 and they were tested. And -- let's see. I'm trying
- 24 to figure out -- $m\!y$ question came down to whether or
 - Page 83
- 1 not it was necessary to do more groundwater sampling 2 at the site to determine whether or not there was
- 3 contamination from either the Christo's site or
- 4 elsewhere, because it wasn't necessarily clear to
- 5 me.
- 6 In reading your memo -- we're talking about
- 7 page 3 and PAH levels -- which I'll ask you to
- 8 explain what they are -- whether or not the tested
- 9 levels in 2003 would still be acceptable now and
- 10 whether or not further tests need to be done to
- 11 determine whether or not they're acceptable now.
- 12 Does that question make sense?
- 13 MR. CHAMBERS: Yes, absolutely.
- 14 MS. POVERMAN: Okay.
- 15 MR. CHAMBERS: So currently there's no --
- 16 so the way the Massachusetts contingency plan is set
- 17 up is when you identify a release -- and oftentimes
- 18 that happens in a tank pull. When you're pulling
- 19 out the tanks from a gas station, there's leaks and
- 20 things associated with it. And so presumably, these
- 21 studies were done related to pulling out the tanks
- 22 and closing out the gas station.
- 23 The levels that I saw in these different
- 24 compounds -- so the PAHs are polyaromatic

- Page 84
- 1 hydrocarbons. They're kind of a heavier hydrocarbon
- 2 that does not go to the air. It's more -- you know,
- 3 it's the charred stuff on your hamburger. It's a
- 4 very -- you have a lot of coal ashes in a lot of
- 5 urban areas just from the wide use of coal in the
- 6 area. The levels are not very high. You know, you
- 7 could debate whether they're background or not, you
- 8 know, if I really want to guibble on the technical
- 9 review of the previous opinion. But regardless, I
- 10 don't see those posing a risk to the site use at 11 all.
- 12 They also found very low levels in the
- 13 groundwater of a couple gasoline compounds. They
- 14 were very, very low, though. They would not really
- 15 trigger anything under today's regulations. So I
- 16 really don't see -- other than the vapor intrusion
- 17 issue, I don't see anything in the existing data,
- 18 and there's currently no regulatory requirement to
- 19 do any further testing on 455.
 - And, in fact, it's likely the
- 21 responsibility -- the way the Massachusetts
- 22 contingency plan is written is, whoever is the
- 23 responsible party for creating the release on
- 24 Christo's is really the one responsible for
- Page 85
- 1 protecting any impacts from that release, even if 2 they cross into other properties.
- What makes this one a little unique and why
- 4 we recommend that the developer deal with it is the
- 5 developer is changing the use of the property to
- 6 residential and putting a larger building that has
- 7 the potential to draw things in. And I think the
- 8 prudent thing is to look at that, even though it's
- 9 not necessarily their, you know, responsibility as a 10 property owner.
- 11 MR. BOEHMER: Kate, can I ask a question?
- MS. POVERMAN: Sure.
- 13 Cliff Boehmer is now asking a question.
- MR. BOEHMER: So the no testing -- you did
 - say that they would probably have to categorize soil
- 16 that they would take off the site?
- 17 MR. CHAMBERS: Soil that goes off-site is
- 18 documented to have low levels of PAHs and low level
- 19 gasoline compounds. You know, it was a
- 20 closure-level assessment. There may be some low
- 21 levels of contamination there that -- where that
- 22 goes to be used makes a big difference. You don't
- 23 want to use it as topsoil in a daycare, for
- 24 instance. And so in that regard, it's not regulated

PROCEEDINGS Page 86 1 where it sits right now because it's in an area --2 it's not posing a risk to anybody where it sits 3 right now. MR. BOEHMER: Okay. Understood. MR. CHAMBERS: The whole basis of the 6 current Massachusetts environmental regulations are 7 about the risk different types of contaminates pose 8 to people's health and the environment. When I started this business, everything 10 was supposed to be cleaned up and pristine, and we 11 just found we couldn't do that, so now the 12 regulations are much more tailored to, you know, 13 addressing the risks. And I'm really not seeing big 14 risks to what's on-site, other than the management 15 of soil that goes off-site. The only real risk I 16 see is that neighboring property vapor migration. 17 MS. POVERMAN: So your recommendation 18 basically would be either an assessment and 19 remediation or proactive addressing? 20 MR. CHAMBERS: Yeah. Basically do enough 21 assessment which, you know, if they come -- you're

22 either going to need a professional opinion that you

23 trust saying there's enough assessment out there

24 that there's no chance of vapor migrating into the

Page 88 1 tanks. Actually, I've done a lot of work for the 2 town. I've been an advisory committee member for 23 3 years, saved the town hundreds of thousands of 4 dollars. I also wrote the bylaw and I also wrote 5 the Phase 2 stormwater management system for the 6 town, which the town got an award which never 7 mentioned my name. MS. POVERMAN: Okay. This is not relevant. 9 MR. LEBOW: Just giving a little 10 background. So anyway, I'll take the second part first. 12 All soil that gets transported are under 310 CMR 30. There's rules, regulations. And that's the transportation of contaminated soil. And whether 15 it's low level or high level or whatever, that's what you use.

If there is a good enough component of --18 petroleum component, you can have it go to a 19 recycling plant. If there is no petroleum 20 component, then it'll either go to a lined or an 21 unlined landfill. In this case, I would suspect it would go to an unlined landfill.

For every 500 cubic yards, which is 750 24 tons, you have to go through a myriad of tests, like

1 116 chemicals. Not just chlorinates, but all kinds

2 of heavy metals, all kinds of tests before a

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17

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1 building -- I suspect if I was working for the
 2 developer, my recommendation would be just, you
3 know, eliminate it from happening, rather than
 4 paying for the science project. But that's their
5 choice, I would imagine.
            MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Thank you. I don't
7 have any further questions.
            Yes, Geoff.
            MR. ENGLER: The applicant in this case
9
10 brought their LCP tonight to respond to the analysis
11 that was just delivered.
12
            MS. PALERMO: LSP.
13
            MR. ENGLER: LSP.
14
            MS. PALERMO: Licensed site professional.
15 But I don't know that there's any need to --
            MS. POVERMAN: What would your LSP like
16
17 to --
18
            MR. LEBOW: I just want to respond. My
19 name is Fred Lebow, L-E-B-O-W.
            MS. POVERMAN: If you can tell us
21 succinctly what you would like to tell us, that
22 would be great.
            MR. LEBOW: Fred Lebow, president of FSL
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24 Associates. We're the fellows that pulled the

3 landfill will take it, whether it be recycling or 4 not recycling. So that test -- nobody will take it 5 unless you do those tests, so that's a reality. It 6 gets signed off for a bill of lading by an LSP, and 7 that gets transported. There's no issue there. That's what the 9 law is. It's not optional. That's what it is. So we'll go to the next thing: the vapors. 11 First of all, when we pulled the tanks, there were 12 three 6,000-gallon fiberglass tanks, double walled. 13 Fiberglass tanks typically don't leak, and these 14 didn't, so we found no contamination that was 15 reportable to DEP. There was -- we did a fair amount of 16 17 testing. A lot of people don't even keep tank 18 closure reports. We always did. If there was no 19 contamination, they never even wrote up a report.

20 We just kept it for our records, which I'm glad we

21 did. So the tanks didn't leak, we didn't find any 22 contamination, so it wasn't reported to the DEP.

23 Turns out it was slightly upgraded from the dry

24 cleaner.

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                                              Page 90
            Now, I've done a lot of groundwater
                                                         1 40 mills. It comes out -- it's pretty thick. You
 2 modeling. And groundwater can flow a lot faster
                                                         2 lay it in. It's not very expensive. And that will
 3 than contaminated groundwater, so I suspect that
                                                         3 cover anything.
 4 this plume, whatever it is, will probably move
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: So just to sort of cut to the
 5 somewhere around an inch a year, so none of us are
                                                         5 chase here, you have already recommended to the
                                                           developer --
 6 going to be here by the time it reaches that
 7 property -- if it can go up hill.
                                                                     MR. LEBOW: Absolutely.
            The requirement under 310 CMR 40.1004
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: -- to install a vapor barrier
 9 Section 3 says that any spill that's reported to the
                                                           and not worry about trying --
10 DEP, you have to determine what the plume is
                                                                     MR. LEBOW: Not worry about a thing.
11 vertically and horizontally. We're not -- that
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: -- whether this does or does
                                                        11
12 plume isn't even close to our property, so --
                                                        12 not create vapor problems for the building as
13
            MS. POVERMAN: What plume are you talking
                                                        13 constructed, which is what I had asked, and that's
14 about?
                                                            really what we need to know.
15
            MR. LEBOW: The chlorinated spill.
                                                        15
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: But where is the barrier put
16
            MS. PALERMO: He's talking about Christo's.
                                                        16 in?
17
            MR. LEBOW: From the dry cleaners.
                                                        17
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: It's put in when you
18
            MS. POVERMAN: Okay.
                                                        18 construct the building. It's part of the
            MR. LEBOW: We don't have any issue. But
                                                        19 construction.
19
20 however --
                                                        20
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: Under the slab, under the
21
            MS. POVERMAN: When was there a chlorinated
                                                        21 concrete slab.
22 spill there?
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: It's very much a -- in many
23
                                                        23 respects -- potentially unnecessary protection, but
            MR. LEBOW: I forgot the year.
24
            MS. PALERMO: He's talking about the report
                                                           it's a good thing to do, as our LSP suggested. So
                                              Page 91
                                                         1 this is perfectly reasonable. And thank you.
 1 that we just got from our LSP saying that there
 2 is --
                                                         2 That's really all I need to know.
 3
            MS. POVERMAN: That was the event?
            MS. PALERMO: Yes.
            MR. LEBOW: It has nothing to do with us.
 6 But, first of all, the DEP doesn't do the
 7 investigation. Somebody did a Phase 1 report on
 8 environmental assessment, and they found that there
 9 was a spill. Usually a bank usually requires --
                                                         9 status under 310 CMR 40.0180.
                                                        10
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10 when there's a dry cleaner, it raises the red flag. 11 They make you do -- drill wells, and they found a 12 chlorinated spill. So then they're required to now 13 check the neighborhood. The owner is required to 14 check the neighborhood to find out if there's any 15 vapor intrusion. We're not even close to that site. 16 Nobody has contacted, and I don't expect anybody 17 will. 18 However, I was more concerned about the gas 19 station that's only 15 feet away. If they had a 20 truck and they had a spill or something like that, 21 that could cause vapors in the building. So I

22 recommended to my client to put an HDPE, which is a

24 The state building code only requires 6, but this is

23 a membrane, 40 mills thick, for the vapor barrier.

MR. LEBOW: And by the way, let's assume --4 just for the sake of assumption, let's assume there 5 was a spill on the property from a neighbor, whether 6 it be the gas station or some other place, even an 7 oil tanker got loose from a neighbor behind the 8 building, they would file a downgraded property The only obligation they have under that 11 provision is to allow people to work on their 12 property if it's affected their property. So they 13 have to allow them to get on. They have to do an 14 imminent hazard elevation. And that's pretty much 15 what they -- I mean, those are the key things that 16 they have to do, and that's about it. So I don't see -- this is petty -- this is 18 probably one of the safest sites in the city. I 19 mean, the town has had more contamination than this 20 site. MS. POVERMAN: Does that barrier cover the 22 whole of the --MS. PALERMO: Yes. MS. POVERMAN: Excuse me, Lark.

17

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                                                                                                        Page 96
                                               Page 94
 1
            Does that barrier cover the whole of the --
                                                                     Basically, the trash plan is to have a
 2
            MS. PALERMO: He's made a recommendation --
                                                          2 trash room in the building, to have both recycling
3
            MS. POVERMAN: Lark, I'm asking --
                                                          3 and trash containers in the building, and to use a
            MS. PALERMO: He's made a recommendation to
                                                          4 private contractor to pick up the trash. When the
 5 the developer that they install a vapor barrier.
                                                          5 truck comes, the trash will be -- the truck will
 6 That's what we need to know. We don't need to know
                                                          6 park in the loading area, which, as we've explained
 7 the engineering associated with it until they get
                                                            previously, is just two parking spaces in front of
8 their design further along.
                                                            the building. The trash will be collected and then
            MS. POVERMAN: But I have a question, so
                                                            the private contractor will wheel the containers
10 please let me ask it.
                                                           back into the trash room.
            This barrier you're talking about, does it
                                                         11
                                                                      Pat Maloney had no problem with the
12 cover the whole of the property that they --
                                                         12 proposed trash plan, although he did say that once
13
            MR. LEBOW: It only covers under the
                                                            the building is occupied, he would like to
14 building.
                                                            reevaluate it to see that it's working effectively.
15
            MS. POVERMAN: The current building?
                                                         15
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Anything else on the trash
16
            MR. LEBOW: No, no. When they put a new
                                                         16 plan?
17 building in, they put this in and that's it.
                                                         17
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: That was it.
18
            MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.
                                                         18
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Mr. Hussey, do you have any
19
            Polly.
                                                         19
                                                           questions?
20
            MS. SELKOE: A drainage report was also
                                                         20
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: No, no questions.
21 submitted by the development team. It was prepared
                                                         21
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Ms. Palermo?
                                                         22
22 by Allen & Major, and it has been reviewed by the
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: No.
23 director of transportation and engineering, Peter
                                                         23
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Then I think this is
24 Ditto.
                                                         24 the point in the proceedings where we will allow
                                              Page 95
                                                                                                        Page 97
                                                          1 public comment. But I believe there is an attorney
            The conclusion of the drainage report was
 2 that the proposed site development reduces the
                                                          2 representing some of the neighbors, so, Mr. Hill, if
 3 amount of impervious area within the watershed area,
                                                          3 you would like to come up, that would be great.
 4 and the roof stormwater is collected and discharged
                                                                     MR. HILL: For the record, my name is Dan
 5 via a roof leader to a proposed draining manhole
                                                          5 Hill. I'm a land use attorney based out of
                                                           Cambridge. I do a lot of work on 40Bs, and I
 6 over the 12-inch municipal drainage pipe in Harvard
7 Street.
                                                           represent some other neighborhood groups in
            The remaining site impervious area sheet
                                                           Brookline on 40B matters.
9 flows towards Harvard Street at Thorndike. All site
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Could you speak into the
10 stormwater will continue to discharge through the
                                                         10 microphone and talk a little more slowly.
11 12-inch drainage line at the intersection of Harvard
                                                                     MR. HILL: Sure. So I wanted to make a few
12 and Thorndike as it does now.
                                                         12 comments about some of the jurisdictional and
13
            Peter Ditto reviewed the entire drainage
                                                         13 substantive issues that are raised by the project.
14 report, over 48 pages, and he concluded that it is
                                                         14 I want to start with the comment that was made
15 an adequate report. And his only request is that
                                                         15 earlier about the architect not being here, and I
16 when there is a final site and drainage plan, that
                                                         16 want to thank the member for raising that point.
17 it be submitted to him for his final review.
                                                            Frankly, I think that's a major blunder on the part
18
            MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.
                                                           of the applicant, not having Peter here to hear
19
            Any questions?
                                                         19 Mr. Boehmer's comments.
20
            MR. HUSSEY: No.
                                                                     And the comment was that -- from
            MS. SELKOE: There was also a trash
                                                         21 Mr. Engler -- that he communicated with the town
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24 department, Pat Maloney.

22 management plan submitted by the development team,

23 and that was reviewed by the public health

22 that Mr. Bartash could not be here. Frankly, I

24 zoning board, not with planning staff. If the

23 think those communications should be made with the

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Page 100
                                               Page 98
 1 zoning board wants Mr. Bartash here, that should be
                                                         1 it's less than 25 percent.
 2 the prerogative of the zoning board.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Well, we can determine later
            And I think it speaks to this greater issue
                                                         3 whether you round up, but that's a good point.
 4 we have in Brookline. And what's really unfortunate
                                                                     MR. HILL: Yeah. I'm not expecting answers
 5 is that we have a gold rush of 40B applications in
                                                         5 right now. I just want to raise some points.
 6 Brookline right now. And unfortunately the state,
                                                                     With respect to some of the substantive
 7 DHCD, has put this town in a very uncomfortable
                                                         7 issues that are facing this project, I know traffic
8 position of having to deal with all of these 40B
                                                         8 isn't on the agenda for tonight, but I wanted to
                                                         9 raise it so that at least the applicant can have
9 applications at once. And I don't blame the town at
10 all. It's really the state that's put us in this
                                                        10 advanced notice of these issues.
11 position of having to be susceptible to all these
                                                                     We feel there's still some significant
12 predatory 40B projects all at once, and I think
                                                        12 sight-distance issues here with the project. I know
13 that's shameful on the state's part. I just want to
                                                            they attempted to address some of these. We feel
14 make that point up front.
                                                            there's an issue with the intersection of Thorndike
15
            I want to move on now to the jurisdictional
                                                            and Harvard, with the garage, and the sidewalk and
16 issues. One issue that we flagged --
                                                        16 garage on Thorndike Street.
17
            MS. POVERMAN: I do want to point out, this
                                                        17
                                                                     To illustrate the Thorndike at Harvard
18 is not a legal argument, so if you could be really
                                                        18 intersection, the issue here is they're measuring
19 quick through these issues, that would be fantastic.
                                                            sight distance from a point in Thorndike Street
                                                        19
            MR. HILL: Sure. So the first issue is
                                                            that's on the other side of that crosswalk. So you
21 this issue with site control. It's a prerequisite
                                                        21 can see from this diagram that the stop bar is
22 of 40B. The applicant stated in their application
                                                        22 located to the right by several feet from where that
23 that there's a lease on the property. This lease --
                                                        23 sight line -- where the sight distance is measured.
24 the applicant claims that the lease is in breach by
                                                        24 That's not the correct way to measure sight
                                              Page 99
                                                                                                      Page 101
1 the tenant. MassHousing has required that the
                                                         1 distance. This is the correct way to measure sight
 2 applicant produce evidence that the lease has been
                                                         2 distance: the black line from where the bar is. In
 3 terminated.
                                                         3 fact, it's not where the bar is. It's several feet
            So I guess I have a question. It doesn't
                                                         4 behind the bar. That's where the driver sees the
 5 have to be answered right now, but I want to make a
                                                         5 traffic.
 6 point and basically ask the board to ask the
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: I think it would be better
 7 applicant to provide proof that this lease is, in
                                                         7 to bring this up when we're talking about traffic,
8 fact, terminated. I guess I would ask if the tenant
                                                         8 so this is -- you have an absolute right to address
9 shares the same sentiment as the applicant, that the
                                                            this, but better at the time that the topic is being
10 tenant is, in fact, in breach of that lease.
                                                           addressed. So I don't want to --
11 Because if it's not, then that's a major problem and
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: And if you get me your
                                                        11
12 this applicant truly doesn't have standing to even
                                                        12 comments, I can get them to our peer reviewer.
13 apply for a 40B permit if there is inadequate site
                                                        13
                                                                     MR. HILL: Okay. We'll bring it up then.
14 control due to a lease.
                                                        14
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Noise, as well, is something
15
            MS. SELKOE: They got a PEL.
                                                        15 that we will address.
            MR. HILL: The other jurisdictional
16
                                                        16
                                                                     MR. HILL: You don't want to talk about
17 question I have is on the affordability of ratio.
                                                        17 noise?
18 Are we still at 17 units with this project?
                                                        18
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: Not as it applies to the
            MS. POVERMAN: Yes.
                                                        19 lifts.
```

20

MR. HILL: Yeah. So MassHousing requires

21 there to be 25 percent of the units be affordable.

22 My math says that that's five not four. So this

23 project, I believe, is proposing four affordable

24 units. Four divided by seventeen is greater than --

MR. HILL: Okay. That's your prerogative.

Shadows: A shadow study was submitted by

22 the applicant. I think this is within the scope of

24 shadows basically all year long on 78 Thorndike

tonight's hearing. This project would be casting

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                                              Page 102
 1 Street. It was interesting, there was a lot of
                                                          1 very minimal setbacks on Thorndike and Harvard
 2 emphasis on Harvard Street being shadowed. And that
                                                          2 Street and a very minimal setback to the abutter at
 3 is correct. But the impacts on this direct abutter
                                                          3 78 Thorndike Street. So we feel that the board of
 4 are quite shocking.
                                                          4 selectmen and the planning board got it right, that
            I want to talk about the loading zone
                                                          5 this project is far too intense and dense for this
 6 briefly, since that was brought up. It seems to me
                                                          6 specific property.
 7 that what the applicant is proposing here is to ask
                                                                      And even the Davis Square peer reviewer
8 the Town of Brookline to basically give them a
                                                          8 stated some of these concerns. Although he wasn't
9 license to use a portion of the right of way, the
                                                          9 concerned about the height, he was concerned about
10 public way --
                                                             setbacks, he was concerned about mechanical
                                                             equipment not being fully delineated and all the
            MS. SELKOE: You know, again, Peter Ditto
12 will be present June 7th when we're discussing the
                                                             impacts being fully characterized. So we do
13 traffic issues, and he's the one --
                                                             support, you know, those comments by the peer
            MS. POVERMAN: Polly, I actually find this
                                                            reviewer.
15 helpful if it's brought up. So if it's just raised,
                                                                      I want to go back to the -- well, I have a
16 that's fine and then moved on.
                                                            comment about the commercial use. Maybe that's not
17
            MS. PALERMO: Except the issue is being
                                                         17
                                                             appropriate.
18 represented in a very odd way. Based on what we
                                                         18
                                                                      MS. POVERMAN: You mean the retail use?
19 were told, there is no request on the part of the
                                                                      MR. HILL: Yeah, the retail use. This is
                                                         19
20 developer to establish an easement for the use of
                                                         20 chapter 40B. This is a statute that's intended to
21 the space as a loading zone. They're simply saying
                                                         21 provide zoning relief for affordable housing, not
22 it could be a location that is a shared loading
                                                         22 for commercial uses. And I question how appropriate
23 zone. So I agree. I think we need Peter Ditto.
                                                         23 it is for the applicant to be seeking significant
24
            MS. POVERMAN: Yeah. If it's raised as an
                                                         24 zoning relief for a project that includes a
                                              Page 103
                                                                                                       Page 105
                                                          1 first-floor retail space that otherwise would have
1 issue, then we can move on. Thank you.
            MR. HILL: Thank you.
                                                          2 to comply with Brookline's zoning requirements,
3
            MS. POVERMAN: And density, that's fine.
                                                          3 design review requirements, parking requirements,
            MR. HILL: I guess I'm confused what's in
                                                          4 loading requirements. It strikes me that that -- I
 5 the scope and what's not.
                                                          5 think the board should get some legal advice on that
            MS. POVERMAN: Site design is absolutely in
                                                          6 specific issue. You don't have to take my advice,
7 the scope. I can understand your frustration.
                                                          7 but this strikes me as being outside the scope of
            MR. HILL: All right. So, you know,
                                                          8 the zoning board's authority to be granting these
9 frankly, we feel that the issues that were raised by
                                                          9 kind of waivers to this extent for a commercial use
10 the planning board, the issues raised by the board
                                                         10 on a 40B.
11 of selectmen, the preservation committee were all
                                                         11
                                                                      MS. POVERMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.
12 germane. This project is ultimately just too dense
                                                                      What I will ask you to do -- we will now
13 for the site. There was talk tonight about the
                                                         13 hear people from the neighborhood. What I would
14 height being okay. I think I heard Mr. Boehmer say
                                                         14 like to ask is that the developer please not talk
15 he wasn't concerned about the height.
                                                         15 amongst himself.
            I think the neighbors and folks who live in
                                                                      {\operatorname{Mr.}} Danesh, {\operatorname{Mr.}} Danesh, if you have
16
                                                         16
17 this area and visit this area would say it needs to
                                                             something to say, would you please say it outside of
18 be seen in context. The height needs to be seen
                                                         18 the hearing room. Thank you.
19 holistically with the other dimensional
                                                                      If you would like to say something, please
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20 nonconformities, specifically the setbacks. A

21 height of four stories might be acceptable on a

23 and where there is more setbacks to the street.

24 This property provides essentially zero setbacks,

22 property that's much larger where there's open space

20 come up to the microphone, identify yourself. Line

22 Please address the issues we discussed today. If

24 say, I agree with Ms. or Mr. X. It's getting late,

you agree with something that was said before, just

21 up. That would be great. Identify yourself.

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                                             Page 106
 1 so brevity would be appreciated. And again, please
                                                          1 encourage people to go out to the site and take a
 2 try to address the issues at hand. Thank you.
                                                          2 look at it. That's it.
            MS. ECHELMAN: My name is Janet Echelman.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Thank you very much.
 4 I am a visiting professor in the department of
                                                                     MR. LEPSON: Hi. My name is Bob Lepson.
 5 architecture at MIT and a resident and owner at
                                                          5 I'm a new town meeting member in Precinct 9. I live
 6 64 Coolidge Street.
                                                          6 on Thorndike Street.
            I took these photos today. This is the
                                                                     First the comment I'd like to make -- as I
8 view from where I eat dinner every night with my
                                                          8 was sitting here watching what just transpired over
9 family, and this is the impact of the shadow and
                                                          9 the last five minutes while Mr. Hill was talking, I
10 blocking the view of this proposed lack of setbacks
                                                         10 was dismayed and very, very upset at how Mr. Hill
                                                         11 was treated. He is -- this is part of the public
11 on Harvard Street.
            MS. POVERMAN: I'm not sure what we're
                                                           comment, and his comments were dismissed one, after
                                                            another, after another. And I think that was highly
13 looking at. I'm sorry.
14
            MS. ECHELMAN: Okay. So this is looking --
                                                            inappropriate, and I don't feel that that was the
15 this is Shimon's gas station, and this, the white
                                                            way that the public should be treated. That's
16 picket fence.
                                                         16 number one, and I want to put that on record.
17
            MS. POVERMAN: Why don't you bring it up?
                                                         17
                                                                     I also want to just comment about the
18
            MS. ECHELMAN: I'll bring it up.
                                                         18 setbacks, for sure. It is too large of a building
19
            The white picket fence -- okay. So here we
                                                        19 for too small of a space. And it's been said time
20 are looking at Shimon's gas station and the white
                                                           and time again, hearing after hearing. That cannot
21 picket fence. Here's the before and after. So this
                                                         21 be emphasized more than that.
22 white picket fence, and I'll show people, is the
                                                                     I think, also, the height of the building
23 Shan-A-Punjab. This is the property we're
                                                         23 is out of control. It is way too big. When you
24 discussing, and this is the same.
                                                         24 come up from Allston going into Brookline, the
                                             Page 107
                                                                                                      Page 109
                                                         1 height is -- it's just an overwhelming building that
            With no setback on Harvard Street and going
 2 up to this height, it effectively completely
                                                          2 is not in context with the neighborhood. And, in
 3 obliterates any kind -- I don't even need to say
                                                          3 fact, the development absolutely disrespects the
 4 anything more, but I guess it's being transcribed,
                                                          4 town and the neighborhood by having the size and the
 5 so I'll say it obliterates the view. The lack of a
                                                          5 scope that it is.
 6 setback and the lack of additional setbacks at each
                                                                     And I think, Ms. Poverman, you also used
 7 level make not only for an ugly view on Harvard
                                                          7 the term "the building is stark and institutional"
                                                          8 earlier in the evening, and I would agree
8 Street, but also a lack of sunlight. And this is --
9 this is the view in the morning. I think that this
                                                          9 100 percent that the architectural nature of that
10 height and this lack of setback should not be
                                                         10 is. So if there's something that's going to be
11 allowed and is unconscionable.
                                                         11 there and it has to be there because of 40B, it
12
            MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.
                                                         12 should not be stark and institutional, and those are
13
            MS. HOUSMAN: Sue Housman, 46 Columbia.
                                                         13 two of the items that I'd like to talk about.
14
            I'm encouraged by the comments both from
                                                         14
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.
15 the podium and from the town about increasing
                                                         15
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16 setbacks, and I want to support as vigorous an 17 attempt as possible on the setbacks on all sides of 18 the property, especially in view of line of sight, 19 which I understand belongs to the traffic.

20 The other very quick comment I wanted to 21 make was that the slide of Thorndike Street, I 22 think, is extremely misrepresentative of the real

23 feel being out there in the neighborhood. It

24 doesn't look remotely like that, and I would

MS. SHAW: Hi. I'm Sloat Shaw,

16 88 Thorndike Street.

17 I actually wanted to mirror what Mr. Lepson just said, that it just seemed really inappropriate to cut off Mr. Hill, who was making some really good points. And I was kind of shocked because this is an open forum.

MS. POVERMAN: Actually, you're right, and 23 I apologize for that. That should not have 24 happened.

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            MS. SHAW: So I wanted to bring up when he
                                                          1 income, is the rental from 76 Thorndike Street.
 2 was talking about -- I'm sorry. I forgot your
                                                                     And another thing, it's only 5 feet from
 3 name -- but talking about the tanks at the gas
                                                          3 the new building that's going up. What if a fire --
 4 station. I've been at Thorndike Street since 1981,
                                                          4 both kitchens on the second floor and on the first
 5 and I remember when Tommy replaced the metal tanks
                                                          5 floor face 455 Harvard Street. In case of a fire,
 6 because they were leaking. And then he put in
                                                          6 where do the firemen get a ladder up and place them
 7 fiberglass tanks about 10 years before he sold the
                                                          7 there or there. You have to go up straight. And I
8 property.
                                                           think the fire department should be asked about it.
                                                         9 Thank you.
            And I was concerned when that -- there were
10 always smells coming into my basement that we
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: The fire chief will
11 constantly had to call the fire department about,
                                                        11 absolutely do an analysis. I just want you to rest
12 and I wanted the soil tested more than it was
                                                        12 assured of that. Okay. Thank you very much.
13 tested. I don't think that the entire site was
                                                                     MS. VANDERKAY: Hi. I'm Judith Vanderkay,
14 tested.
                                                        14 town meeting member, Precinct 9 and homeowner at
15
            When I called the DEP to ask about the
                                                        15 16 Columbia Street, very close to this property.
16 testing of the site, they said that the people that
                                                                     I won't go into details because I did write
17 test the site are the new people who buy the
                                                        17 you a letter that will be posted tomorrow. And I
18 building, and that testing is usually confined to
                                                            agree with everything that everyone has said so far.
19 certain areas. And, also, the town can order
                                                           This is just way too big, way out of proportion,
20 testing, but not somebody like me right down the
                                                        20 perpetrated on our neighborhood with disrespect and
21 road.
                                                        21 disingenuousness, and that's the only detail I'm
            And what I asked about the site was there
                                                        22 going to go into.
23 was a hoist on the site. Is it a hoist?
                                                                     I think it's, well, very disingenuous to
            MR. LEBOW: A pneumatic lift.
24
                                                        24 tell us that building out to the lot lines is a good
                                             Page 111
                                                                                                      Page 113
            MS. SHAW: A pneumatic lift on the site
                                                          1 thing, that it will restore some mythical
```

2 where Tommy would pour down antifreeze and things 3 like that. 4 MR. LEBOW: Hydraulic oil.

MS. SHAW: There were a lot of toxins that

6 he would pour down. And when the place was sold, he 7 was walking around saying, I hope -- not to me. I 8 didn't find out about this until later. He said, I 9 hope they don't locate the lift, where it was. It 10 wasn't in the spot with the garage. So that was 11 what I was concerned about at the site, so that was

12 my comment. I don't think that the site has been

13 inspected as well as it need be.

MS. POVERMAN: Thank you. 14

15 MR. CAMPBELL: My name is James Campbell. 16 I live at 78 Thorndike Street, and it's a two-family 17 house. The 76 we rent, and we occupy the first

18 floor and the third floor, and we bypass the second

19 floor through the stairway.

20 We never had any problem renting the 21 apartment because, as everybody said, it's a nice,

22 sunny apartment. If you put up a four-story

23 building, it won't be sunny no more and it'll be

24 hard to rent. And that's part of my sister's

2 streetscape that we don't have now and that we don't

3 want. We like our open space. We like to see the

4 sun set across the parking lot. We don't want a row

5 of monolithic buildings taking away the sky and the

6 air and the breezes. We like our little gas

7 station -- former gas station building -- and we

8 really hope that if something has to replace it,

9 that it be something that is much more friendly to

10 its context. Thank you.

MS. POVERMAN: If you could just save your 11

12 applause to the end, that would be great.

13 MR. SCHLATTER: Hi. I'm Tom Schlatter.

14 I'm a resident at 121 Thorndike Street.

15 I apologize. I'm not really clear on the 16 whole process that we're going through here as far 17 as 40B goes -- allows them to get out of certain, 18 you know, zoning requirements or dimensional limits.

MS. SELKOE: At the next hearing on

20 June 7th, we've invited Judi Barrett, our consultant

21 on 40B matters, to come speak to you about what the

22 parameters of the 40B process are.

MR. SCHLATTER: Okay. And I'm also a

24 little unclear on the aesthetic matters that we've

Page 114 1 covered tonight as well. I think it's great to hear

2 about them and that they're in the scope of the

3 discussion.

As far as my comments go, looking at this building as precedent for what's going to come next, the next building that's going to be a little bit

7 bigger, a little bit higher, a little bit more than 8 what our standards allow today, and I'm concerned

9 about the next developer pointing at this and

10 saying, well, that was okay. Why can't I do

11 something like that.

12 In our neighborhood, we've got tall 13 buildings, we've multistory, flat-roofed buildings, 14 we've got buildings with no setback. But there's no

15 tall, multistory, flat-roofed buildings with no

16 setback, and we don't need one in this location.
17 I think the aesthetic discussion about the

18 presentation of the building coming from Allston

19 towards Coolidge Corner on Harvard Street was a

20 great one. I think the building makes for a really

21 poor gateway to Brookline and to the neighborhood.

22 It's not in keeping with its neighbors on Harvard

23 Street. I am really concerned about the safety of

24 the entrance to the parking on Thorndike Street with

1 address some of these, ask questions, or the LSP to

2 talk about some of these environmental questions,

3 since this is the topic for the meeting.

4 The one thing I didn't hear the LSP --

5 which I think his analysis of work down there seems

6 to be -- you know, technical analysis -- very good.

7 One thing I didn't see get mentioned down there was

8 the question of radon, which I don't know if it's

9 required or basically was requested in your

10 contract.

11 But in New England geology, radon is a 12 potentially serious problem. And when you're

B putting a building like this basically property line

14 to property line, which is more than any previous

15 use, restaurant, service station, whatever over

16 there -- down there, many of the things that he

.7 mentioned over there possibly concentrating radon,

18 which is a gas, basically pulling it out,

19 concentrating it out to the property line where it

20 would go right into our neighbors down there, 5 feet

21 away plus the 3 feet that he now has to the side

22 entrance. You know, that is a potential problem.

23 So, again, I think that's something that if 24 that's not already been looked at, I think should be

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1 no setback with poor visibility there.

2 That's the end of my comments. Thank you.

3 MR. PINCHES: My name is Fred Pinches, 4 F-R-E-D, P-I-N-C-H-E-S. Old Brookline resident,

5 practically a native of the neighborhood.

6 I know that you basically stopped Mr. Hill 7 on the question of traffic noise -- not traffic

8 noise, but the parking situation down there because

10 question, which I think also comes under pollution

9 that's a topic for another night. One noise

11 over there, would be the HVAC units on the roof.

12 Seventeen units, each one with its own unit, plus

13 there's probably going to be two or three for common

14 areas, retail space, the whole thing, plus possible

15 exhaust fans from outside of the building, from a

16 potential restaurant or other uses over there. A

17 restaurant would pretty much require that. I'm sure

18 Pat Maloney can explain all the requirements on

19 carbon filters and everything else, food odors, a

20 number of other things over there which also would

21 be environmental, which seem to be the purview of

22 this meeting.

23 So I would like to throw in now that you 24 possibly let Mr. Hill have another opportunity to

Page 117 looked at down there. It's an environmental

2 question, again, a topic for this meeting. And if

3 it wasn't included in this contract, maybe we could

4 amend his contract for a few minutes or a few days,

5 whatever it takes, because radon is a very serious,

6 you know, invisible threat, but it's deadly and the

7 end. So that would be another environmental

8 question.

9 Also, the question just as more of the

10 practical things over there, you see the elevations
11 to the rear door. Again, the people -- the wall

12 that's going to be facing our neighbor's house.

13 Clapboard siding sounds nice, but it's still a

4 three-story wall that they're going to be looking

15 at.

They refer to a number of service doors.

17 Now, exactly what are these service doors going to

18 be used for? At the last presentation, they said

19 that they were going to have an exit for the trash

20 room, or entrance/exit, whatever, down there, a walk

21 down to the Starbucks property line, so to speak, to

22 the loading zone where the trash would be picked up.

23 So what's going to be happening at the rear entrance

16

1 containers out to Thorndike Street for the town?

2 Other things going on? Whatever. What's going to

3 be happening there?

4 And this gets back to the question of noise

5 pollution, which is a recognized form of pollution,

6 which can seriously affect the quality of life,

7 also, which would be even worse, because of the

8 small space between the property lines and the fact

9 that any noise is going to be basically echoing,

10 bouncing all over the place over there.

11 At least the existing use of the buildings 12 that are there now, pretty much the open space that

13 was referred to earlier down there, many of these

14 problems, sound and everything else, possible gas

15 down there, would be dissipated fairly quickly and

16 easily, now may be concentrated by this wall.

17 And, again, the wall itself down there

18 could become a wind tunnel, which could make it even

19 more difficult for somebody even to get into the

20 side entrance of the property, which he would like

21 to rent, and which he has historically rented, and

22 which is very important for them, financially as

23 well as other reasons.

24 And, I mean, people are going to be trying

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1 show the big disparity in height between the

2 surrounding neighborhood, which I think they are

3 either intentionally or unintentionally trying to

4 obscure to make this thing look -- with the mythical

5 tree, everything looks very nice.

6 So I think the environmental questions, I

7 think, we should be looking at specifically, some of

8 the less technical questions, like the wind tunnel,

9 the noise, the previous uses over there, the service

10 station, which was very nice. They saved the old

11 Texaco station. That was something.

But our neighbors had enough problems over

13 there with b.good, with the trash dumpsters, the top

14 banging late at night, all the noise from that kind

15 of thing. And now we're talking about service doors

16 that are going to be right on the property line.

Again, noise is a recognized form of

B pollution, and I think we should be looking at that.

19 And, again, it's an environmental question. I think

20 we would hopefully let Mr. Hill, if he is prepared,

21 to have another opportunity to address those,

22 excluding the traffic and parking.

23 MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.

MR. PINCHES: So those are the questions I

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17

1 to go in during a windy day, and this 35-foot wall,

2 depending on the wind direction -- and I'm sure we

3 can get meteorological data for that from the

4 weather service -- you're going to have a wind -- a

5 wind tunnel. So, I mean, people are going to be

6 trying to get into the side entrance over there.

7 They're going to be blown out onto Thorndike Street.

8 So I know some of these things down there

9 may be more on the aesthetic side, the practical

10 side, but I think it's all, you know, relevant

11 because of the impact of this building, which,

12 again, I think is just too big. I mean, I know real

13 estate is location, location, location. 40B, it

14 seems to be, is always wrong location, wrong

15 location, wrong location.

16 And I think when you take out all the

17 artificial trees, the simulated trees, everything

18 else over there that makes everything else look

19 nice, and the one view that they show from the

20 Harvard Street elevation over there, if you remove

21 the mythical tree from the left side over there,

22 you're going to be looking at the houses on Lawton

23 Street: two-family houses, roughly that same kind

24 as Thorndike Street. And, again, I think that will

1 think we should be looking at.

MS. POVERMAN: Thank you very much.

3 Mr. Rosen.

4 MR. ROSEN: I'm only here because I was

5 summoned to the microphone. Just kidding, of

6 course.

7 Hi, everybody. Thanks for letting me have

8 a chance to give a few comments about the

9 presentation tonight. I want to thank everyone who

0 spoke in support of continued setbacks. And I just

1 wanted to point out in terms of distances, the

.2 distance of this 40-foot brick wall to the

13 Campbells' house is most likely closer than that

14 chair is to that chair where your stenographer is

15 sitting right now.

And if you can imagine being in the

17 Campbell house looking out the window trying to

8 figure out what the weather's going to be like

19 today, all you can see is, humm, looks like it's

O going to be brick wall and partly brick wall, and

21 maybe if I look up high enough -- you know, it's

22 just a terrible mess. I don't know how you're going

23 to design -- pass muster. It's just a horrible

24 thing.

16

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                                              Page 122
            But I did want to mention a couple things
                                                          1 project look better and work better and to fit in
 2 that nobody brought up. I mean, the architect does
                                                          2 the context not just of Harvard Street -- people did
 3 seem like a talented fellow. I'm sure he could do
                                                          3 talk about, well, there's zero setbacks on Harvard
 4 better. You know, I'm not sure why Mr. Boehmer was
                                                          4 Street. Well, what they failed to mention is that
 5 trying to wax eloquent about it. I thought the
                                                          5 there's zero setbacks on a one-story building.
 6 design looks something like a renovated warehouse.
                                                          6 That's a lot different from the zero setback on a
 7 You really haven't done character to it.
                                                          7 40-foot brick wall. It's -- you know, emotionally
            But I did want to discuss a couple of
                                                          8 and physically in the way it's perceived by the
9 things about the developer's presentation. They
                                                          9 pedestrians, a 40-foot brick wall right next to you
10 lack detail. They did discuss the mechanical
                                                         10 like this is very oppressive. However, if it's set
11 parking system, but there's no forthcoming detail of
                                                        11 back 20 feet, it's not so bad. Maybe you can have a
12 the manufacturer, the model number, and the make.
                                                           little green space. And it provides a quality of
13 In previous meeting with other 40B hearings, we
                                                         13 living, I think, that Brookline is more noted for.
14 found --
                                                         14
                                                                     Mr. Boehmer did mention that the north face
15
            MS. POVERMAN: Actually, it is online.
                                                         15 of the building, when you approach from Allston,
16
            MR. ROSEN: Is it?
                                                         16 sends a very negative message about the design
            MS. SELKOE: It is, and we'll be discussing
17
                                                        17 aesthetic of Brookline and what they're allowed to
18 that in greater detail --
                                                         18 build here and what they support. So I encourage
19
            MS. POVERMAN: At the next hearing.
                                                         19 your continued effort to really bring this into line
20
            MR. ROSEN: The other question I have is
                                                         20 with the four sides of continuity of this building,
                                                            the residential as well as Harvard Street. Thank
21 about the lighting, specifically, and how high up in
22 the air is the lighting and what is the dispersal of
                                                         22 you.
23 the lighting and what is the measurement of the
                                                                     And I remember when Tommy had the
24 lighting in terms of a standard management, which
                                                         24 fiberglass tanks taken out, too, because the other
                                             Page 123
                                                                                                      Page 125
1 is -- ANSI is a standard lighting measurement
                                                          1 ones were leaking. So, you know, anyway, that's
 2 indicator. "ANSI lumens" is what they're called,
                                                          2 food for thought.
 3 and it gives you an indication of what the light
                                                                     MR. ABBOTT WHITE: Good evening. My name
 4 outfit is from these lighting instruments that
                                                            is George Abbot White. I'm another town meeting
 5 they're putting around the building. My concern is
                                                          5 member, Precinct 9. I live at 143 Winchester
 6 it's going to change the character in the
                                                          6 Street, which is a continuous, for 19 months,
7 neighborhood by lighting up the neighborhood
                                                          7 construction site.
8 excessively, so I'm concerned about that.
                                                                     And I'd like to associate myself with my
9
            And, again, I spoke to Mr. Boehmer about
                                                          9 neighbors. One level, this is what democracy looks
10 this earlier. The idea of actually having lanterns
                                                        10 likes. But I guess what I want to say, this is not
11 and green space around the building serves the
                                                         11 what democracy looks like.
12 function of not only making the building look nice
                                                                     Which I mean by that is that this evening
                                                         12
13 and blending it in with the surrounding area, but it
                                                        13 and for a number of evenings going forward, people
14 also helps to decrease the amount of ambient traffic
                                                           are going to present objections. Some of them may
15 noise that otherwise would be funneled down into
                                                         15 be of an expert nature, and some of them may be just
```

What I'm concerned about is that this community, my community, has felt this need to come 21 out late at night, many nights, to make obvious in 22 some ways what you as experts should be doing. And

are going to be here.

18

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23 I want to say that I was appalled. I'll say that.

24 I'll repeat that. I was appalled that the counselor

people who have, like me, lived here 40 years and

who hope, God willing, to have grandchildren that

So I think a lot can be done to make this

23 help to mitigate that.

16 relatively quiet neighborhoods like Thorndike

17 Street. They make it much noisier because it would

18 just -- it reflects the surfaces of the building,

19 essentially. Stone and glass reflects down. It

20 will funnel it down into a quieter neighborhood.

22 mythical trees but the real ones, it would really

21 And so if we have more actual plantings, not

1 for the neighbors, someone who had to be secured by

2 them, and as we did with the 420 Harvard Street,

3 paid for so that they could begin to secure our

4 rights as citizens in our town. We're here. We're

5 going to stay here, God willing. But the developers

6 are going to come, and the developers are going to

7 ao.

And I think what I want to say this evening

9 is I'm very disappointed. I think it's your job at

10 one level to protect us, not just to sit there and

11 mock our counsel, to rush him through an attempt to

12 lay out some things. Cut him a little slack, give

13 him a little leeway. I was appalled by that, and I

14 think in the evenings to come you can do better, in

15 the same say that Mr. Rosen and Bob Lepson and some

16 of the other people have pointed out I think quite

17 clearly.

18 This is a project like so many others that

19 is driven by greed. That is the word that I know

20 we're living in at the time. And it's entirely out

21 of human scale. It is entirely out of human scale.

22 It's not very attractive, and it doesn't make any

23 attempt to be attractive to the people that, after

24 they go, will have to live with it. This isn't your

Page 127

1 neighborhood. You'll be gone. You will be gone, 2 and our children and grandchildren will be here and 3 they'll have to deal with it.

So I'm going to say it again to this board. 5 I think -- and we have a whole bunch of new town

6 meeting members in Brookline and they'll be meeting

7 very soon. And some of them are already gathering

8 in caucus. And I need to tell you, I need to put

9 you on notice, this is one of the things they're

10 going to be asking questions about: Are you, in

11 fact, advocates for us or not? And I have to tell

12 you now, the perception is that you are absolutely

13 not. Thank you.

14 MS. KOLODNER: My name is Anna Kolodner. I

15 live at 26 Columbia Street.

So I've listened to some of the experts who 16 17 have talked about precedent as a rationale for the

18 development of this building. And as a sociologist

19 who has studied urban development, I can tell you

20 that precedent is a specious argument for promoting

21 another building. If you just look at the urban

22 development decay, many of those cities were built

23 on one precedent after another precedent. So

24 precedent about -- that we have other 40B buildings

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1 in this neighborhood are not good, and that they

2 don't make this building any better whatsoever.

I don't remember everybody's name, but the

4 gentleman who gave the lengthiest report divided

5 Harvard Street into two sections: the section

6 facing towards Boston, and the section facing

towards Brookline. And it was clear that the

8 section facing towards Boston is one that's

9 diminished. It's diminished in pedestrian traffic,

10 it's diminished in site because it doesn't have

11 attractive buildings.

So why wouldn't this board and the Town of 13 Brookline take a leadership role and say that's not

the direction we want to go in? We want to go in

the direction towards Beacon Street, which has

smaller houses, setbacks, green space, where

essentially -- what you're doing, essentially, is

setting the precedent for the Boston view of Harvard

19 Street to be decimated, because this will be the

20 benchmark for what happens in the future.

21 The only other question I have, which is

22 relevant to what the previous gentleman just said,

23 has to do with -- I've been in Brookline for 25

24 years. Can you tell me, in the hierarchy of value,

Page 129 1 what the residents' perspective is? Whose voice do

2 you listen to, and what weight do you give to the

3 residents of the neighborhood who seem to me to be

4 unanimously opposed to this. I have not heard one

5 comment in support of this. So what voice do we

6 have? How do you view the public's voice, and what

7 percentage of input does that have to this decision?

Thank you.

MS. POVERMAN: Actually. Let me answer

that. It will be helpful if you do come to the

11 June 7th meeting when we have our 40B specialist,

Judi Barrett, who has been retained by the city --

town -- to help us navigate the difficult waters of 13

14 40B.

15 As board members, we take the input of the

16 citizens very seriously. We read your letters. I

find testimony very helpful. I take it into account

18 as additional evidence to be taken into account in

19 addition to what the experts say.

40B is a very difficult law in some ways.

21 It's very complicated, and it requires a lot of

22 balancing, and we have to ultimately apply the law.

23 And Judi, next time, will help, I hope, explain all

24 the various factors that have to be taken into

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 1 account. But I do hope that you and all the
 2 neighbors do continue to come.
            MS. KOLODNER: Can I just get one other
 4 small point? When the gentleman who represents the
 5 40B, the affordable housing, made his comments about
 6 the -- that the architect was not here and etc., he
 7 commented that he would bring all the expert
8 testimony back to the architect, but he left out
9 that he would bring the public's comment to the
10 architect. And I think for me, at least, that's the
11 most important. Thank you.
12
            MS. POVERMAN: I think we have our last
13 person.
14
            MS. GALLIMORE: My name is Joanna
15 Gallimore. I live at 11 Russell Street. This is
16 the second 40B hearing I've attended, so I just felt
17 I had to speak. I'm a little nervous. The first
18 one was just down the block, and it's virtually
19 identical. Neighbors voiced very, very good
20 comments, but it will end up with very little
21 mitigation of the actual proposed building.
22
            But having lived in the area for a long
23 time, I'm discouraged that potentially the very
24 pleasing aspects of this part of Brookline are
                                             Page 131
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MS. GALLIMORE: On Sunday, I see countless 3 people come up from Boston, a stream of people just 4 walking down the area to enjoy the open area of this 5 part of Brookline that is quite in contrast with the 6 bordering Boston. It's almost as though people 7 almost sort of -- psychologically, it's a very nice 8 place to be as opposed to being in the street or an 9 area of Boston nearby that has just been overbuilt 10 or built up with no sense of just a nice place to 11 walk, a very walkable area. So I'm afraid that that's what I'm seeing, is all these buildings are going to basically eliminate that. And that's due to the mass of the building, the actual size. So really nothing -- it just has to be mitigated in height to some degree. I appreciate this building is shorter than the others. It's 18 still at least a story too large, and that's just 19 the bottom line. And I think that -- so I do think 20 this thing should be defeated because it is not 21 addressing local needs, it's not -- it's eliminating 22 more open space, and it is not in scale to the 23 entire neighborhood, which I think are valid 24 arguments to deny this design as it stands. So Page 133 1 thank you.

1 Street. He just abbreviates it a little bit.

1 eventually going to be eliminated, and then we will 2 just have an area that people want to pass through 3 as opposed to stay and linger, which is what's 4 happening now. And so to me, the primary problems 5 these buildings are causing is the loss of sunlight 6 to this area of Harvard Street, which is diminished; 7 the commercial area, no one's going to want to hang 8 out and gather in front of stores if there's no 9 sunlight. 10 And I disagree with Mr. Boehmer. There is 11 quite a vista that goes all the way down Harvard 12 Street and is defined by the trees, by the 13 buildings. You can just have this beautiful view 14 all the way up Harvard Street, which makes the area 15 so pleasing. So I'm very dismayed that you see it 16 as just something that has potential for a large 17 building. 18 MS. POVERMAN: Actually, I'm going to 19 interrupt for just one minute. I'm sorry. To give Mr. Boehmer credit, he left out 21 part of his analysis, which is on the web, which has 22 a large portion of the overall character of Harvard

23 Street, which I think you'll appreciate when you see

24 it. It does discuss the whole feel of Harvard

MS. POVERMAN: Thank you. MS. BUCKLEY: Hi. My name is Caroline Buckley and I live at 45 Coolidge Street. First, I want to concur with the other 6 speakers. The imposing height of the building is 7 exacerbated by the lack of setbacks from Harvard and 8 Thorndike Street. The minimum setback to the 9 abutters results in an absolute loss of light and 10 privacy, which is further aggravated by the outdoor 11 patio on the fourth floor which looks directly into their yard. In my opinion, a larger setback from 13 the abutter is needed. 14 Also, a transition zone or a smaller 15 setback from Thorndike Street may be considered in 16 an effort to mitigate height. This transition zone from the public footpath to the private residential 17 building would provide a much needed open space. The building, as proposed, is depriving JFK Crossing of what little open space is left and is playing a

significant part in generating an urban jungle

devoid of plantings, greenery, and open space.

24 the proposed design and its mediocre genericness

Finally, the architectural aesthetics of

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                                              Page 134
 1 doesn't make any attempt to enhance or excite the
                                                          1 neighborhood in this public meeting what their
 2 area. Conversely, the blank brick elevation, devoid
                                                          2 concerns are. And we've also accepted written
 3 of fenestration facing the Starbucks parking lot
                                                          3 comments. So I think we're very well aware of what
 4 lends a fortress-like facade to the street.
                                                          4 the neighborhood's concerns are.
            And then just to do with the materials that
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: So the next meeting you would
 6 are selected for the building, in my opinion, the
                                                           have would just be with the planning board and --
 7 abrupt change from three elevations of masonry and
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: Planning department staff, the
8 brick to a solitary clapboard elevation is quite
                                                            development team, and Mr. Boehmer. And that's the
9 jarring, and it takes away from a cohesive-looking
                                                            practice that we've had with the other cases too.
10 building. And I think that maybe having the
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: All right. Well, my
11 materials reflected on all four sides of the
                                                         11 perspective is much the same as the people in the
12 building would create for more of a cohesive
                                                           neighborhood have said. We all know the building is
                                                            larger than we want it to be. And I think it would
13 expression in the building.
14
            All right. That's all I want to say.
                                                         14 be helpful for the developer to recognize that there
15 Thank you.
                                                         15 should be some adjustments made; clearly to the
16
            MS. POVERMAN: Thank you.
                                                           setbacks, also to the height, which might be
17
            Okay. We will move to the next stage, but
                                                            addressed through reducing the floor-to-floor,
18 first, Mr. Hill, I want to apologize again for the
                                                           ceiling-to-floor heights. And the materials, we
19 discourteous behavior you were shown and my personal
                                                        19 need more specific information about materials,
20 lack of courtesy. It will not happen again.
                                                         20 about the mechanicals, the location of the
21
                                                         21 mechanicals. There's a fair amount of work to be
            Now I would like to have the three of us
22 give a charge to the developer if we agree, which I
                                                         22 done, and I'm hoping when we all get back together,
23 think we do, for the most part, on what we'd like to
                                                            we'll see the results of that.
24 see, taking into account for changes based on what
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Chris, what is your comment?
                                             Page 135
                                                                                                       Page 137
1 Mr. Boehmer has said in terms of working groups,
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: Well, I've basically made
 2 which I think has happened in the past quite
                                                          2 them. I think dropping the roof cornice is a good
 3 successfully with the developer, members of the
                                                          3 idea, reducing the floor-to-floor heights, and some
 4 planning department, and Mr. Boehmer.
                                                          4 more setback at Thorndike in the rear.
            Lark, what would you like to say?
                                                                     But I think what we're going to have to
            MS. PALERMO: Well, I also wanted to
                                                          6 decide at some point is whether or not to tell the
 7 know -- there was a meeting with the neighborhood,
                                                          7 developer he's got to take two floors off. I think
8 Polly?
                                                           that's the only thing that will satisfy the
9
            MS. SELKOE: It was -- the developer held a
                                                            neighbors. It may or may not result in answers that
                                                            we want to hear, but at some point we probably want
10 meeting with the neighborhood.
            MS. PALERMO: That didn't involve the
11
                                                         11 to make that request. And we could talk more about
                                                         12 that sort of thing with Judi.
12 planning staff?
13
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: Well, keep in mind that even
            MS. SELKOE: That's correct.
                                                         13
14
            MS. PALERMO: Okay. So we don't know what
                                                         14 under current zoning, if it weren't a 40B and it
15 happened at that meeting?
                                                         15 were a 40A and it needed to conform to our zoning
            MS. SELKOE: Well, we've heard about some
                                                         16 bylaws -- which 40Bs don't have to conform to our
16
17 things that happened. We don't know specifically.
                                                            zoning bylaw, as mandated by the state -- they would
18
            MS. PALERMO: Okay. Well, one of the
                                                         18 be allowed to have a 40-foot tall building.
19 things I would like to see is some meeting that
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Yeah. That's a very good
20 incorporates the folks in the neighborhood with the
                                                         20 point.
21 developer, if we could have something along those
                                                         21
                                                                     UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Could you
22 lines.
                                                         22 clarify that?
            MS. SELKOE: Well, that's not typically
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: So what Polly is saying is
24 what we do, and I think we've heard from the
                                                         24 under the current zoning, it is a commercial
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                                             Page 138
 1 district. And even if this weren't a 40B project,
                                                          1 buildings are going to be pretty big and pretty
 2 they could build a 40-foot-high building. However,
                                                          2 tall. There is not much that, as of right --
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: Right. Well, you're talking
 3 the setbacks would be different.
            UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: Polly, could
                                                          4 about non-40B projects, because a 40B project does
 5 you clarify the FAR? If they build a 40-foot
                                                          5 not have to conform to zoning, and that's mandated
 6 building, how wide --
                                                          6 by the state. It's not something the town had
            MS. SELKOE: I don't think this is the --
                                                          7 mandated.
            MS. POVERMAN: I don't know if that's
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Well, my view, personally,
 9 something we can look at. But I do not feel
                                                         9 is that this is a project which -- well, let me say
10 personally, at this point, ready to agree that a
                                                         10 this: I agree that the setbacks on Thorndike and
11 substantial drop in height is something I would
                                                         11 with the neighbor need to be increased. I think
12 discuss.
                                                         12 that the look of the project, as Cliff Boehmer has
13
                                                         13 set out, can be improved and articulated to be more
            Lark, have you thought about that?
            MS. PALERMO: I have thought about it, and
                                                         14 in keeping with the type of neighborhood. I think
15 I have not come to a conclusion. I'm listening to
                                                            that the architect, the planning department, and
16 Chris. And as an architect, I -- which he is -- I
                                                         16 Mr. Boehmer have the skills and experience to
17 very much respect his opinion.
                                                         17 develop the bays, the articulations to make it a
18
            What it comes down to is whether this
                                                         18 building that fits in much more with the stream
19 project would be feasible economically for the
                                                         19 of -- you know, fill in the architectural detail
20 developer if we insisted on this. And I'm not
                                                         20 word -- of Harvard Street and Thorndike.
21 saying that because I care desperately about whether
                                                                     That is going to entail a fair amount of
22 this is economically feasible for the developer,
                                                         22 work. I don't mean to minimize that. But I think
23 because I don't. I'm saying it because if it isn't,
                                                         23 that given the law of 40B, we also have to be quite
                                                         24 realistic about what we ask. I think that getting
24 then they'll overturn our decision and build what
                                             Page 139
                                                                                                      Page 141
                                                          1 significant setbacks would be very helpful in terms
 1 they want.
                                                          2 of making the project more palatable.
            MS. SELKOE: The Housing Appeals Court.
                                                                     As unpleasant as this may be to hear, I
            MS. PALERMO: So we'll just have to be
 4 mindful of that. But that doesn't mean we can't
                                                          4 think that this developer has been -- unlike other
 5 ask, and it doesn't mean that we can't look to the
                                                          5 developers, has not come in high, saying, okay, I
 6 developer to consider that and potentially come up
                                                          6 know they're going to ask me to cut off 20 percent,
 7 with a project that is economically viable that is
                                                          7 but they come in with what's a relatively reasonable
 8 at least a floor lower.
                                                          8 ask. And I know that's hard to hear, but based on
 9
            MR. HUSSEY: I'd like to answer the
                                                         9 other things we've seen, this is relatively
                                                         10 reasonable. And that doesn't mean I think we're
10 question about the zoning, what is it now. Because
                                                         11 seeing the final amount. It doesn't mean I think
11 what this basically goes back to, you've got a lot
                                                         12 that it is where we should end up. You know, it may
12 of other lots around here besides these 40Bs. The
13 zoning now, as has been stated, allows a height of
                                                         13 have to be a lower number of units to get to a size
14 40 feet, an FAR of 1. This project is 2.46. The
                                                         14 based on bigger setbacks. So I don't mean to say
15 setbacks -- the Harvard Street setback is 10 feet
                                                         15 that. But we also don't want to punish the
16 that's required now, and the Thorndike is 10 feet,
                                                        16 developer for being reasonable.
17 so the setback are not all that different from what
                                                        17
                                                                     So where I come down is bigger setbacks, at
18 you're seeing there.
                                                         18 least on Thorndike and the neighbor. I'd love to
```

21 stuff in there.

What I tell people, if you really want to

20 get what you want, you're going to have to change

21 the basic zoning in the Town of Brookline through

22 your town meeting representative. That's the core

23 problem here. This project will come and go,

24 however it happens. But as of right, future

19

see some vegetation on the side facing Starbucks to

So I think we're actually all pretty much

20 head off all the vapors and also to get some green

23 in agreement, except for the possibility of asking

24 for a reduction in the height. So do you guys want

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                                             Page 142
 1 to draw a line in the sand now?
                                                                     So this is our opportunity to try to make
            MS. PALERMO: I actually have another
                                                         2 it a better building for the neighborhood and for
3 question, because you're sitting there with the
                                                         3 the town and to keep us in compliance with the 40B
 4 zoning code.
                                                         4 law which circumvents local zoning bylaws because we
            The reason we keep talking about what can
                                                         5 don't have 10 percent of our units that are
                                                         6 considered to be affordable in the Town of
 6 the developer do as of right is because what that
 7 means is they can just do it without having any
                                                         7 Brookline. So as long as that's the case,
8 public hearings or coming to us. And that as of
                                                         8 developers can do this, and we are the victims or
9 right is something that is always a threat, and I
                                                         9 the beneficiaries, whichever way you want to look at
10 think that's something to think about as well.
                                                        10 it. But that's what I wanted you to understand, and
11 Because if they weren't doing a 40B project, I'd
                                                        11 what parking was. So okay, thank you.
12 like to know what they could do as of right.
                                                                     Yeah, height. I don't know, Chris. What
13
            So it's 40 feet of height --
                                                        13 do you think? Do you want to ponder this?
            MS. SELKOE: Let me just say that a project
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: Well, I think we should get
15 of this size would never be as of right; not because
                                                        15 all of the peer review through and then have a
16 of the height, but any projects in Brookline that's
                                                            general discussion at the end that decides whether
17 four or more units requires a special permit for
                                                        17 we start asking for a reduction in the number of
18 design review.
                                                        18 floors or not.
19
            MS. PALERMO: What about commercial?
                                                        19
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Well, I think that's
20
            MS. SELKOE: Any project that's greater
                                                        20 difficult because I think we need to give a charge
21 than six units requires a special permit for
                                                        21 to the developer now to start working --
22 affordable housing.
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: The developer is hearing us.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: Yes. But I think that --
            A commercial project would have to meet the
24 parking --
                                                        24 don't we want them to see what they can come up with
                                             Page 143
                                                                                                      Page 145
            MS. PALERMO: Well, that was where I was
                                                         1 in terms of tweaking or --
 2 going. Yeah, you could do a commercial project as
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: We're asking for more than
 3 of right without getting any approvals, provided
                                                         3 tweaking right now. This is not tweaking. We've
 4 your height is limited to 40 feet, the setbacks, the
                                                         4 asked the developer to do --
5 FAR is 1.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: But we have a set amount of
            And that was my question: What's the
                                                         6 time. So when does this hearing -- when is the 180
7 parking requirement?
                                                         7 days up?
            You don't have that in front of you. Okay.
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: I believe it's in October.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: October?
9
            MS. SELKOE: The parking requirement is one
10 parking space for every 350 square feet on the
                                                        10
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: I think it's too soon.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: All right. So we go out to
11 ground floor.
                                                        11
12
            MS. PALERMO: Okay. Every 350 square feet.
                                                        12 June 7th?
13
                                                        13
            MS. SELKOE: On the ground floor.
                                                                     MR. HUSSEY: Yeah.
14
            MS. PALERMO: Just on the ground floor. So
                                                        14
                                                                     MS. PALERMO: That's fine by me.
15 that's all they're measuring?
                                                        15
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: But I do think that the
                                                        16 development team has heard what you've had to say
            MS. SELKOE: No. I'm sorry. And then on
16
17 the upper floors, it's one per 550.
                                                        17 and sort of what the neighbors have to say. And I
18
            MS. PALERMO: Okay. So I was just trying
                                                        18 think we can -- hopefully they will make some
19 to get a sense of how out of compliance this
                                                        19 progress in revising their design.
20 building would be if it were a commercial building.
                                                                     MS. POVERMAN: All right. Is there any
21 Because in order to help the neighborhood understand
                                                        21 other administrative stuff we need to deal with,
22 what we struggle with, that is what we struggle
                                                        22 Polly?
23 with, because that's something that we would have no
                                                                     MS. SELKOE: Well, just to say that this
24 control over if the developer proposed it.
                                                        24 hearing will -- you will be continuing it to
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 1 June 7th. And on the June 7th meeting, we will be
 2 hearing from the traffic and parking peer reviewer
 3 on some of the issues that were mentioned here
 4 tonight.
             We also will be hearing from Judi Barrett
 6 about the parameters for 40B projects and the ins
 7 and outs of what it means if, let's say, this board
 8 were to not approve it or to approve it with
 9 conditions or -- and the implications of all that
10 and what the housing appeals court has done in other
11 cases when things have not been approved.
12
             So I think that for all of you here
13 tonight, I think it's very important that you attend
14 so you can ask questions about the process and
15 understand it a little bit better.
16
            MS. POVERMAN: Thank you. This hearing is
17 adjourned until June 7th at 7:00.
18
             (Proceedings adjourned at 10:19 p.m.)
19
20
21
22
23
24
                                              Page 147
             I, Kristen C. Krakofsky, court reporter and
 2 notary public in and for the Commonwealth of
 3 Massachusetts, certify:
            That the foregoing proceedings were taken
 5 before me at the time and place herein set forth and
 6 that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript
 7 of my shorthand notes so taken.
            I further certify that I am not a relative
 9 or employee of any of the parties, nor am I
10 financially interested in the action.
11
             I declare under penalty of perjury that the
12 foregoing is true and correct.
13
                            day of May, 2017.
14
15
16
    Kristen Krakofsky, Notary Public
17 My commission expires November 3, 2017.
18
19
20
21
22
23
2.4
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	PROCEEDINGS
1	17-apartment 21:24
1 8:12,18 20:5 46:24 58:20	18 25:11 36:12
91:7 139:14 143:5 1,700	180 145:6
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